

ISSUE 6 THE NEW MUSIC MAGAZINE

WIRE

Cleveland

Watkins

the
voice

pat metheny

mark murphy

blue note at 50

can

roadside picnic

mingus revisited

50 albums reviewed

WIRE MAGAZINE

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"I can definitely say that soul is in it.
It will continue to go forward."
CHARLIE PARKER, 1953



COVER:

Cleveland

Watkins

books

rewards

platinum.

by

Conny!

Jay.

WIRE

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COME OUTSIDE

MICHAEL PETRUCIANI, Peter Brotzmann, John Surman, the Geri Allen/Courtney Pine Duo, Ernst Reysger's Amsterdam String Trio and Shankar are among the artists appearing at this year's Outside In Festival, to be held at the Hawth Centre, Crawley, on 1-3 September. Other artists due to play in one of the festival's four on-site venues include Rahib Abou Khalil, Pinski Zoo, Blind Idiot God, Danny Thompson's Whatever, the Kenny Wheeler/John Taylor Duo, John Rae Collective, Howard Riley, Roadsides Picnic, Orphy Robinson Septet, Frevo, Points On The Curve, B-Shops For The Poor, Infernal Triangle, Joe Lee Wilson, DHSS, Bukky Leo, the Iain Ballamy Qt, a special project from Alex Maguire and a mini-fest of Sheffield New Wave bands, including Hornweb and Feetpackers. Details and ticket prices from 0293 553636. Outside In is a Wre/Serious Productions/Elephant Lager co-promotion.

POWYS TO YOUR ELBOW

SONNY ROLLINS, George Russell, Jimmy Giuffre and James Moody are among the players at this year's Brecon Jazz Festival, which takes place from 18-20 August in the sleepy Welsh country town of Brecon in Powys. Highlights include The World's Greatest Jazz Band with Scott Hamilton and Warren Vache (18); George Russell Orchestra with Andy Sheppard, Jimmy Giuffre Quartet, Frevo (19); Sonny Rollins, James Moody Quartet, Arguelles (20). Concerts take place during the afternoon and evening at three different venues while other events in the Festival's spe-

cial Stroller programme include sets from the Enrico Rava/Joe Lovano/Miroslav Vitous/Tony Oxley group, the Orphy Robinson Quartet, the Kathy Stobart Quintet, the Alan Skidmore Quartet and many others. Details from 0874 5557.

MINGUS HO HUM

CHANNEL FOUR mark the tenth anniversary of Charles Mingus's death with a programme on 5 August devoted to the first performance of a newly-discovered composition, *Eptaph*. The concert, which actually took place at New York's Lincoln Centre in June, features an orchestra of over 30 musicians (see Brian Priestley's report elsewhere in this issue). Expect transmission time around 11pm but check your daily paper for details.

WHERE THERE'S A C, THERE'S A BRASS

THE LONDON South Bank Centre's annual Summer Jazz Festival this year features a week of Scottish music, from 14-20 August. Artists appearing are the Tommy Smith Qt, Orange Ear Ensemble (14 August); Bobby Wellins/Jim Mullen Group, Fiona Duncan, Forne Cairns and the McJazz All-Stars (15); Martin Taylor Qt, Dick Lee's Chamber Jazz (16); John Rae Collective, Chick Lyall Duo (17); Carol Kidd Trio (18); Jimmy Deuchar Qt, Melanie O'Reilly and Easy Street (19); John Surman with the Strathclyde Youth Jazz Orchestra (20). All concerts are in the Purcell Room. Details from 01 928 8800.

The festival coincides with the launch of a new record label, Watercourse, which aims to prom-

ote new music from Scotland. First releases include a compilation LP *Mason* (which has tracks from the John Rae Collective, composer Bill Sweeney and some improvising bagpipers!), a keyboards/electronics LP *Tilting Ground* from Chick Lyall and Tore Brunborg, and *Address To The Devil*, a selection of piano music played by James Clapperton.

WIM WONDERS

BUTCH MORRIS, Derek Bailey and Trevor Watts are among the musicians appearing at the 16th International WIM Festival in Belgium this month. Centrepiece of the Festival, organised by the Belgian Musicians Collective, WIM, is Pool 89 - a pool of 11 musicians from all over the world, including Morris, Bailey, Louis Slavis and Julie Tippetts. Pool 89 will perform in different combinations over the festival's three evenings (4-6 August), while the entire group will also perform two special festival commissions by Bailey (5 August) and Morris (6). Other groups appearing at the Festival, which takes place in Antwerp, include WIM Fanfare Marching Band, the Trevor Watts Drum Orchestra and new Flemish group De Zwemmer En De Zee. Details from 32 3 230 60 75.

FROM TIDDLEY OM FROM

NEW MUSIC premieres at this year's BBC Promenade Concerts (21 July-16 September) include works by John Tavener, Dominic Muldowney, Peter Maxwell Davies, Witold Lutoslawski, Arvo Part, Hans Werner Henze, Alfred Schnittke and Jonathan Harvey. Our pick of the high-

lights: world prem of Maxwell Davies's Fourth Symphony (10 September), the UK prem of Arvo Part's Third Symphony (18 August) and the UK prem of Lutoslawski's Piano Concerto (1 August); plus the special BBC commissions from Tavener (4 September) and Muldowney (11 September). BBC Concert Publications have a booklet listing all Prom goings-on for two pounds.

COPIER CAT

TRUMPETER DENNIS Gonzalez reveals another facet of his artistic talent in the first UK exhibition of his "xerographs" - coloured charcoal on xerox paper - currently running at London's Jazz Cafe. The works, which chiefly depict musicians Gonzalez has either played with or been inspired by, will be on show until 3 September. Details from 01 359 4936.

EXTRA DATES: GIUFFRE, GOD

REEDSMAN JIMMY Giuffre has added a London date to supplement his quarter's visit to the Brecon Jazz Festival (details above). The extra concert is at the 100 Club on 15 August; support is the Orphy Robinson Sextet.

Meanwhile thrash deities Blind Idiot God have also added a London date - at the Town & Country Two on 3 September - to follow their appearance at the truly divine Outside In Festival (details above). London support is the merely mortal Charles Hayward.

OM SWEET OM

INDIAN VIOLINIST L Shankar brings his trio of Zakir Hussain (tabla) and Vikku

Vinayakram (ghatam) to the UK for a brief visit in August and September. They play at Womad (27 August); London Ronnie Scott's (1, 2 September - supported by the Orphy Robinson Sextet); Crawley Outside In Festival (3); Ambleside Zeffirelli's (8); London QEH (10 - supported by the Andy Sheppard/Keith Tippett Duo). Details from 01 437 4967.

PIANO AMMO

A CONCERT from the Cecil Taylor/Roger Woodward 1987 CMN tour is the highlight of Radio Three's new music output in August. The concert will be broadcast in two parts. Roger Woodward performs pieces by Takemitsu, Xenakis and Feldman on 3 August (10.15pm), while Cecil Taylor plays Cecil Taylor on 10 August (9.50pm). Also on Radio Three this month is a two-part programme on bassist/handleader John Kirby, *The Biggest Little Band*, to be broadcast on 11 and 18 August at 5.45pm; and this will be followed on 25 August by the first of four *Jazz Voices* programmes in which Richard Rodney Bennett presents a personal selection of jazz singers. A four-part series on Lennie Tristano begins in September - details next month

I FELT THE BLUES COMING ON... THE BIG BLUES

THE SOUTH BANK Blues Festival promises a rare treat for blues fans this month. Most of the artists represented are making their first appearance in this country, and the line-up mixes contemporary masters such as the sensational Kinsey Report with legendary older figures like Archie Ed-



CHARLIE PARKER used to pawn his sax for a couple of dollars, over it's covered for a couple of million. His horn, plus rare archive pics like the above of Bird and Miles, are on display in *A Hundred Years Of Jazz* - in **DOUBLE DUTCH** below.

wards, Jimmy Nelson and Honeyboy Edwards. All concerts take place at the Queen Elizabeth Hall (Box office: 01 928 8800) and the full line-up is: Big Daddy Kinsey and The Kinsey Report, Archie Edwards, Little Willie Littlefield and the Big Town Playboys (2 August); Kinsey Report, Honeyboy Edwards, Jimmy Nelson and the Big Town Playboys (3); Joe Hughes, Archie Edwards, The Jelly Roll Kings, The BTP's (4); The Jelly Roll Kings, Honeyboy Edwards, Little Willie Littlefield, Jimmy Nelson and the BTP's (5).

KATE'S DATE

KATE WESTBROOK appears with the LSO for the first time on 6 August in a Baroque concert entitled 'Berlin Nights', devised and directed by John Harle. The first half features Kate singing Brecht-Weill's 'Seven

Deadly Sins' in Christopher Logue's translation; the second half features Ms Westbrook with Phil Minton, Sue Bickley and Albert Finney in the evening's title piece.

DOUBLE DUTCH

CHARLIE PARKER'S saxophone, insured for two million dollars, and Louis Armstrong's 1920 cornet (one million) are among the items on show at *One Hundred Years Of Jazz*, an exhibition taking place from 1 August to 10 September in the Meervart Cultural Centre, Osdorpplein 205, 1068 SW Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Originally presented at Darmstadt in 1988 under the title *That's Jazz - The Sound Of The 20th Century*, the exhibition includes instruments belonging to Bix Beiderbecke, Dizzy Gillespie, John Coltrane, Ben Webster and

others, original documents, rare photos and recordings, videos, paintings, films and a special piano concert by Randy Weston.

The exhibition also coincides with the Nos Jazz Festival, which takes place in Amsterdam from 10-13 August and will feature the Andrew Hill Quartet, Clark Terry/Red Mitchell Duo, Geri Allen's Formation, the Bob Stewart Quintet and Cassandra Wilson's Trio. Details on everything from 31 20 107393 or 107498.

GLASS MENAGERIE

PHILIP GLASS'S music drama *1000 Airplanes On The Roof* will receive its London premiere in October as part of a Sadlers Wells autumn season that also boasts four British premieres from the Merce Cunningham company, whose series of programmes includes music by David Tudor, Robert Ashley, John Cage and David Behrman. The Glass piece runs from 23-28 October, the Cunningham season from 31 October - 11 November. Details from 01 278 8916.

NEEDS IN LEEDS

ANITA O'DAY, Bruce Turner, Janice Carmello and Pete King will provide some of the highlights of the largely trad-based Leeds Castle Jazz Proms, to be held in Maudstone, Kent from 24-26 August. Full line-up is also Turner's quintet plus Dave Shepherd, and Georgie Fame with Elaine Delmar (24); veteran vocalist O'Day plus boogie pianist Axel Zwingenberger plus Pete King's quartet (25); Polish modern cat Carmello plus Harry Gold plus Georgie Melly (26). More details from 0622 674177.



where

it's at

this

month

ALDEBURGH Festival (0728 43343)	NOTTINGHAM Narrowboat (0602 705983)	CLUTE SUIT 29	HERB GELLER BIG 30	JAMES MOODY QT 14-19
GEORGE RUSSELL 18	LOI COXHILL 12	OZONE BIG BANG 30	BANO 1	GEORGE RUSSELL 28-31
ALDRSHOT West End Centre (0252 21158)	OXFORD Broadway Jazz SW (0803 33602)	STAN TRACEY, ALAN 31	KUST BANDETS 2	VORTEX
GROFF BROWN BAND 18	BRIAN PRIESTLEY 11	SKIMORE DUO 31	TOMMY CHASE 11	JAZZ BAR
BANGOR Tisbury's (0248 362017)	SPECIAL SEPTET 28	BLACK CAT CLUB N16 (01 254 7407)	CHRIS MCGREGOR 3	N16 (01 254 6516)
GEORGE PARRY QNT 7	SWINDON True Heart (0793 790462)	LODESTAR 31	TREVO 3	DON WELER QT 3
DON RENDELL 21	JOHN BURGESS, 18	BULLS HEAD SW (01601 876 5241)	WATTS DRUM 31	STAN TRACEY, ART 4
BRISTOL Allot Inn (0272 661968)	JERRY UNDERWOOD 18	HARO LINES 2	ORCHESTRA (Benefit for Louis Moholo) 7	DON WELER QT 3
PETE HAMMOND QT 6	KEITH TIPPETT 7	JAZZ CAFE N16 (01 359 4936)	PETE KING QNT, DON 7	JIM MULLEN, MIKE 6
BUXTON Opera House (0248 72190)	TOTNES Dartington (0803 863073)	PIGS HEAD SONS 4	WELER/ MIKE CARR 8	TIM RICHARDS, 9
COURTNEY PINE 6	KEITH TIPPETT 7	DHSS 5	RICHARDSON'S POGO 8	ROLAND PERREN 8
CARDIFF Four Bars Inn (0222 374962)	london	CHRIS BISCOE TRIO 6	WELER/ MIKE CARR 8	HOWARD RILEY, 9
JAZZIKI 10	BARBICAN EC2 (01 638 8891)	JAMES TAYLOR, JOHN 8	ALAN BARNES QNT 12	ELTON DEAN 9
WELSH JAZZ 10	DAVE BRUBECK QT 24	BURGESS QT 8	JIMMY GIUFFRÉ QT/ 12	Haji AKBRA 12
ORCHESTRA 22	w/LSO 26	MERVYN AFRICA QT 9	ORPHY ROBINSON 11	IVOR GOLDBERG TRIO 16
BOB TUNNICLIFFE QT 24	BASS CLEF N1 (01 729 3476)	PHIL BENT BANO 11	SEXTET 15	JOHN ETHERIDGE, 18
BYRON JONES BIG 26	TEO CURSON 1, 2, 3	EVIDENCE 12	HENRY'S PENCIL 13	DICK HECKSTALL 18
GRAHAM WILLIAMS 29	EARL OKIN 8	EO JONES QT 17	PRINCE OF ORANGE SE16 (01 237 9181)	SMITH 18
GLEN MANBY QT 31	TIM GARLANO'S 8	JEFF GORDON QT 25	WATERMANS	ARGUELLES 23
CARDIGAN Theatre Malden (0239 612687)	POINTS ON THE 8	NATIONAL THEATRE FOYER SE1	ARTS CENTRE , Barnfield (01 568 1176)	PETE HAMMOND QT 24
FREVO 18	CURVE 9	OASIS E3 (01 985 2673)	MICROGROOVE 4	DAVE O'HIGGINS QT 25
EDINBURGH Queen Hall (031 668 2019)	RAY (GELATO) IRWIN 10	DEREK BAILEY WITH: 9	DI'S NEW OUTFIT 6, 20	MIKE GARRICK TRIO 31
COURTNEY PINE 19	PETER IND TRIO 15	EDDIE PREVOST, 12	IN A NUTSHELL 13	WATERMANS
GEORGE RUSSELL 20	JACKSON SLOANE 16	JOHN ROWE 12	SKETCH 27	WHITE HART WC1 (01 739 8034)
CAROL KIDD 21	BAND 16	JOHN BUTCHER, WILL 19	EO JONES/BRUCE 5	ED JONES/BRUCE 5
SUNNY ROLLINS 22	BUKKY LEO QNT 17	PAUL RUTHERFORD, 26	ELTON DEAN/JOHN 12	BURGESS TRIO 12
NORWICH Art Centre (0603 660352)	CHRISTINE TOBIN 22	PHIL WACHSMANN 26	ARGUELLES 19	MARK LEVENTHAL QT 26
MORRISSEY MULLEN 12	ED JONES QNT 23	100 CLUB W1 (01 636 0933)	SEXTET July 31-Aug 12	



THEBE LIPERE seen here playing at a benefit for master drummer **LOUIS MOHOLO** at London's *Red Rose Club* in June. Our best wishes go to Louis, now recovering from a double heart attack; another benefit, with the **CHRIS MCGREGOR TRIO** and **TREVOR WATTS DRUM ORCHESTRA**, takes place at the *100 Club* on 7 August. Photo **ANDREW POTHECARY**.



LESTER BOWIE — *past the face*
and *past the basket*

WELCOME BACK to the teleprinter, everyone. What's the first item? None other than a very big cat indeed, Miles Davis. Seems the promoters of the Birmingham International Jazz Festival were being just a tad optimistic when they booked Miles in to play at the NEC on 11 July. Out of the whopping seat capacity of 11,000, the promise of seeing the great man had only persuaded about one thousand punters to acquire tickets two weeks before the event. We hear awful rumours of sponsors threatening to withdraw, heads rolling, etc . . . After our story about jazz battling to win through for the IBA radio franchise in the London area, we hear that Dave Lee's London Jazz Radio has won the day. Full story next month . . . What's up with Europe this summer? The strong dollar and various other shenanigans have meant that comparatively few big names from the US are doing the festival circuit this year — which means fewer visitors for the UK too. Names have dropped in and out of the running for September's Outside In festival with manic velocity. Still, the final bill includes some storming stuff, from Blind Idiot God to Michel Petrucciani — details elsewhere in this ish . . . Oops, pardon our enthusiasm running away. Jason Rebello has not signed with Urban. Is someone going to rectify this oversight soon? And when is some smart A&R type going to snap up Roland Perrin's Evidence, who march on from strength to strength? . . . One gig not affected by the dollar was Jon "Keep plugging the Jazz Cafe" Dabner's mighty Seen On The Green back in June. The sun smiled down on two days of jazz and other rhythms, with amazing sets by Dennis Gonzalez, Pinski Zoo and Fred Ho among the main highlights. Dabner has tapes of most of the music and promises an early release of some of the highlights on LP and CD . . . Also recorded: the two magnificent concerts by the London Jazz Composers

Orchestra, which Intakt hope to release as two CDs . . . We've just snatched an earful of the forthcoming waxing from Courtney Pine. Backed by an American rhythm section for the first time, CP mixes standards — including a lazy, loping "Mellow Tone" and "Skylark" — with Courtney-type titles such as "Scenic Scenes Seen". Try saying that with a mouthful of horseradish . . . Expect a release in September . . . Outrage! Richard Scott, young wizard of the *Wire* bullpen, has had half his album collection ripped off by burglars. If anyone offers you a bunch of 300 or so albums with lots of Cecil Taylor, Steve Lacy and similar cats in it, contact this office immediately . . . If you liked Carolina Benshemesh's photo of Kirk Joseph last month, there's an opportunity to catch an exhibition of Carolina's photos for the next few weeks at the Hawth Centre in Crawley — there until early September. Another good reason to go to Outside In . . . Free plug: we like Audion, cheekily described as "The New Music Magazine" and actually covering lots of stuff even we think is obscure! Issue 12 (June) reviews boxfuls of unusual albums and has stuff on Loren Nerell, Gunner Møller Pedersen, Gunter Schickel and more. A great read. Contact: Alan Freeman, PO Box 225, Leicester LE2 1DX (or phone 0533 557489) . . . How much more reissuing can the market stand? Columbia are pouring out more in their Jazz Masterpieces series, RCA Bluebird just can't stop it, A&M are getting back into the game with old Creed Taylor and Artists House reissues and Blue Note carry on being Blue Note. Now Bob Thiele is handling another CBS Portrait series, Portrait Masters, with some 20 albums being readied for reissue. Thing is: who's able to buy all this stuff? . . . How many jazz musicians do you know with a fax machine? Lester Bowie has one. So do we. The next hip appendage? . . .

THE BIG CAT

PHOTO BY DEREK RIDGERS

SUMMER LISTENING

FROM VENTURE RECORDS



Having been the featured guitarist on many of Bill Laswell's projects for the last twelve years, it should come as no surprise that Nicky Skopelitis should be the first artist to release an album on Laswell's 'Nation' label via Venture. The album showcases Nicky's strength both as a player and composer. The album has an all-star line-up of Skopelitis (guitars), Bill Laswell (bass), Ginger Baker (drums), Fred Frith (violin), Simon Shaheen (violin, duo) and A'i'yb Dieng (percussion).

VE41/TCVE41/CDVE41

Airto Moreira is one of the most prominent figures in contemporary jazz. He has been a five times winner of Downbeat's Top Percussionist Award, a former member of Miles Davis' band, Weather Report and Return To Forever, and in recent years, co-leader of a band with his wife Flora Purim. His new digitally recorded album features a mixture of Brazilian songs and Latin influenced jazz. Featured musicians include Chick Corea, Herbie Hancock, Stanley Clarke, Gary Meek, Mark Egan, Randy Tico and of course Flora Purim.

VE44/TCVE44/CDVE44



AVAILABLE NOW ON COMPACT DISC, ALBUM & CASSETTE FROM ALL GOOD RECORD SHOPS

ROUND UP THE USUAL SUSPECTS

by Biba Kopf

IN THE Society of the Spectacle nobody relishes playing party pooper on prime-time TV. Bill Grundy has yet to recover from the day the Sex Pistols had him for tea on the Granada show he hosted. Hardly earth-shattering news, but a victory of sorts for the prankster spirit. *Lipstick Traces* is American rock writer GREIL MARCUS's catalogue of blips, a celebration of the seconds before the screens go blank. Subtitled *A Secret History Of The 20th Century*, it breaks its own historical boundaries in a dot-to-dot dash through the past to recover its dissenting voices. A big book of loud bangs and silly noises, it's as stimulating as it is stupidly exhilarating. It sounds off Johnny Rotten as anti-christ against 16th century Dutch heretic John of Leyden, sourly pinholes dada's 15 seconds of infamy, followed by the deafness of its participants to last-order calls at Zurich's Cabaret Voltaire, and, at length, traces the japes of juvenile revolutionaries in Paris, which led from the Lettrist International to the Situationist International and the choreography of the student violence of May, 1968. Their story was often absurd and ridiculously self-important, what with their dandy posturing and internal expulsions. But it was also a most sustained and successful campaign of delinquent pranksterism, productively splattering egg on the face of decorum of De Gaulle's postwar France. In the process they devised a deviant form of resistance based on blasphemously silly attacks on the work ethic, customising popular artefacts to re-arm them with a political sting, and the coining of contagious graffiti slogans. Which brings the history back to Rotten, McLaren, the Clash, and punk's hijacking of Situationist communications techniques.

In his sounding of echoes through history, Marcus never pretends his version is other than highly partial. Of course, there are holes in his history, but that's what you would expect in a history of blasted holes. Before *Lipstick Traces*, a populist companion volume to RE/SEARCH'S *Pranks and Semiotext(e)'s USA*, the events described here earned their participants minor footnotes in official histories. Well, being a footnote suits these pranksters fine. From the bottom of the page they can deliver history a hefty kick up the ass. Mobilised in a

single book, they produce enough bootboy power to achieve some dramatically funny shifts in historical perspective.

(*Lipstick Traces*, by Greil Marcus, is published by Secker & Warburg, £14.95)

NEW FUSION

by Paul Gilroy

SO FAR *Sa Classe* is the latest Blue Note offering from Brazilian pianist ELIANE ELIAS. She still plays a lot like Don Grolnick but her compositions have a pleasing delicacy that is nicely offset by the assertive playing of the Will Lee/Pete Erskine rhythm section. Her soloing seems richer and more textured than on her previous solo efforts and the sterling quality of horn work from Ma Brecker's boys is another exciting feature of this album. Eumir Deodada pops up to contribute "Two Way Street" - a brisk dance-oriented instrumental which sounds like something Tania Maria might have come up with in her funk phase.

Mike Brecker also guests on *Bottoms Up* (Atlantic), an impressive solo debut from VICTOR BAILEY. Another alumnus of Manhattan's Music and Art High School, Victor is largely content to work within a musical language provided by greater players but the grace and beauty of his bass playing is beyond dispute, particularly on the unaccompanied closing track "For Wendell And Barbara". His quirky tribute to Miles's influence is entertaining and another oddball cut, "Joyce's Favourite" pairs Vic with his old school chum Marcus Miller in an unusual bass duet. The material spans all styles between the reggae-based vamp of "Kid Logic" and a brooding version of "Round Midnight" where Branford Marsalis and ace guitarist Rodney Jones share the honours. Richard Tee, Wayne Shorter, Terence Blanchard and a host of other star players help to give this strong album an insubordinate streak which makes it a real pleasure. *Bottoms Up* effectively projects Victor's delight in breaking the rules. Saxman KIRK WHALEN's second album *The Promise* (CBS) is decidedly more orthodox. A close associate of Bob James, the Texan tenor player is the most convincing stylist in the current crop of post-Grover sax doodlers. He spices up the characteristically bland flavour of James's production settings. Authentic rhythm and blues grit comes to the fore on down home cuts like "North East Wind" and the album is also notable for strong input from Jerry Peters.

He fares rather better on the comeback track than NDUQU

TRIO



CHANCER whose patchy *Old Friends New Friends* on MCA is a real disappointment. It's interesting that he and Harvey Mason — the best funk drummers of the late 70s — have been completely unable to adapt their skills to the age of the drummer in a box. Again like Harv, Ndugu employs a digital beat on most of the cuts and satisfies himself, if not the punters, by concentrating on playing the vibraphone.

IN A LATIN GROOVE

by Sue Steward

IN A month when Latin music fans could barely find time to wash their hair, there were several high spots. One was truly historic and unforgettable: the night DIZZY GILLESPIE assembled his UNITED NATIONS ORCHESTRA at the RFH. The show swung through spectacular unison and solo work, welded together by the mere presence of the bubble-cheeked one and his occasional Miles-ish intrusions. There were some sensational solos: Steve Turre on conch shell trombone solo; James Moody's Flora Purim parody in falsetto scat; Paquito D'Rivera's clarinet and sax, Arturo Sandoval's blistering trumpet, and of course the percussionists, tiny dynamite, Giovanni Hidalgo and drummer Ignacio Berroa and Airtio with the customary tambourine solo.

Welcome to LOS LLAS, The London Latin All Stars, a consortium pulled together by singer Vic Hugo, the bald-headed charmer fronting Robin Jones King Salsa. The inaugural meeting united reps of London's latin scene including La Clave, Iota Inti and promises from eight more bands. Live events and records are planned to take Latin out of the capital (though Leicester's Conjunto Fuego and Brighton's Cha Cha Bar are already leading the way); Los Llas will operate with a pool of about 50 of the sharpest players, confident enough to promote themselves in the international salsa circuit.

Hot from New York comes a merengue 12", by RAMON ORLANDO, cooked up by pianist/arranger Orlando (Orquesta Internacional) with former *Billboard* columnist Tony Sabonin. "Ring! Ring!" pulls away from the drug-crazed paces and predictable arrangements of most merengue. It's a Bamboloco-influenced merengue funk (a thunderstorm of handclaps, bits of acoustic guitar, rumbling merengue drums, Haitian cymbals, and the strangest fairground organ riffs), with an

occasional swooping Irakere-like bassline, rubbed all along the bass neck.

Finally, if you always wondered about Puerto Rico after all the mentions in *Latin Groove*, tune in to *The Bandang File* (Channel 4) on 5 September for an hour-long special on the politics and culture of the island, including some great music.

RIP RAP

by Russell Lack

THREE HEAVYWEIGHT entrants to the late summer, or maybe that's early autumn melée. Hell, what's time and place, is this rap's middle age or a late and sprawling pubescence? For LL COOL J — two years in orbit — the pastel shades have closed in a little early. His new LP *Walking With The Panther* (CBS) displays all the signs of stagnation, a flurry of political contradictions coupled with parts II, III, and IV of LL's godawful attempts at crooning ballads, which may or may not be merely throwaway padding, or a move to cynically broaden his mid-West radio portfolio. Subtlety here extends to simply SLOWING DOWN the drum track and DROPPING IN some very lame harmonies. The saving graces are the single, "I'm That Type Of Guy", and the closer, "Def Jam In The Motherland". Different strokes of an altogether tougher kind from KOOL MOE DEE, a man once proud to reconstruct LL as Lilly Livered, his *Knowledge Is King* (Jive) boasts the kind of panoramic production, courtesy TEDDY RILEY, always aspired to but rarely reached by so many East Coast rappers, except for . . .

From the best writer hip hop has yet produced, KRS ONE, comes the new BOOGIE DOWN PRODUCTIONS magnifico *Ghetto Music — A Blueprint of Hip Hop* (Jive), 13 self-produced flash-frames of ultrarealist verbal montage, the noise of this and every moment. This rapper just gets better and better although in Europe probably sells less than half what stadium slob-rappers like RUN DMC manage to offload. Still no UK release date for *Straight Outta Compton* by LA's NWA (NIGGERS WITH ATTITUDE) a controversy-bathed phenomenon who, if sampling is a mark of stylistic transcendence, have, in lifting PUBLIC ENEMY extensively, secured themselves a place as this year's fave black radicals of white America. Abandoning the political sincerity of their source, NWA offer up a gross cocktail of fascist abuse, all bound up and ready for export, "Life Ain't Nothin' But Bitches And Money" . . . file under ASSHOLES.



NOVUS



Christopher Hollyday, the young alto saxophone sensation, makes his Novus debut with the eponymously-titled album, released in August. At 19 he is, according to alto-master Jackie McLean, the rising star of the instrument and a guarantee that the bebop torch lit by Parker and Gillespie will continue to glow into the next millennium.

Live, he has extensively toured America's East Coast; became the youngest leader to perform at NYC's Village Vanguard, and toured as featured soloist on Maynard Ferguson's '60th Birthday Tour'.

taught
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his quartet
ing Wall-
(trumpet);
Williams
Cedar



The self-
Hollyday
studying a
jazz and
rare music
me, leads
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ace Ron-
ey David
(bass);
Waltan

(piano) and Billy Higgins (drums). 'CHRISTOPHER HOLLYDAY' features two McLean compositions and several written by or associated with Charlie Parker.

Summing up Jackie McLean states:—"I think I prayed for someone like Christopher Hollyday - guys like him are the future."

PURE JAZZ

MASTERED BY
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At Town Hall, Revisited

*Brian Prestley travels to New York to hear how Charles
Mingus's Town Hall Concert was brought back to life*

Photo by Valerie Wilmer

Rehearsing MINGUS's *Epitaph*, NYC, Jan. 1999; L-R: GUNTHER SCHULLER, JACK
WALRATH, JOHN HANDY, KARL BERGER, BRITT WOODMAN,
RANDY BRECKER

IF IT'S a toss-up between Mingus and Mahler as to who was most into death as a subject, the bassist's rediscovered *Epitaph* suite is actually more concerned (like Richard Strauss) with musical autobiography. It covers everything from a new "jazz version" of "The Chill Of Death", which has echoes of Gustav and Richard and which he always claimed he wrote when he was 17, to his very latest work. And, like *Beneath The Underdog*, it's vast and sprawling.

Doubtless it was an unworthy thought but, when I was first shown the handwritten score for big-band early in February, I was amazed that the bassist had the energy and tenacity to conceive and notate 3,448 bars (two hours' worth) of music. This was exactly the kind of patronising reaction, particularly painful for a black composer, which must have hindered his career time after time. The surprise is, perhaps, that in 1962 he persuaded a record company to underwrite the cost of the notorious Town Hall concert intended to include this entire multi-section piece. The how and the why of its failure are documented in print and on the unsatisfactory album pieced together by United Artists (reissued on Blue Note, and not to be confused with the 1964 session of the same name on Jazz Workshop/OJC).

After the manuscript was identified by Andrew Homzy, Sue Mingus got grants for it to be edited, copied and performed in this tenth anniversary year of her husband's death. She personally contacted the 30 members of the double-sized band (and presumably several more who were not available), winding up with what would be an impressive line-up under any circumstance. The trumpets, for example, consisted of the black big-band veterans Snooky Young and Joe Wilder; middle-generation white jazz sessionmen Lew Soloff and Randy Brecker; Mingus's last regular brassman Jack Walrath; and Wynton Marsalis. The sound of the six of them playing a scale-passage in unison was out of this world.

Chosen to direct the mammoth undertaking was Gunther Schuller, who had to find a suitable running order, iron out ambiguities in the score, decide on tempos and interpretation and in some cases chord-sequences (all these things not written down because, of course, Mingus expected to perform it himself). Schuller himself is a composer/conductor in the same mould as Leonard Bernstein, but much more into jazz — remember "Transformation" and the *Jazz Abstractions* album. His attention to detail helped a lot of passages to sound better than they would otherwise, and the respect he earned from the musicians (some also experienced in crossing the jazz/classical divide) was palpable.

Ready to let the music swing where it was meant to, he's also not averse to getting his own sandwich at the break and then conducting with one hand while holding the sandwich in the other. Instructions to the band are matched to the occasion, using players' first names and street-talk ("Now listen up, here's the deal") or loftily lecturing them: "My dearest friends, we have to get some dynamics into this. We've been corrupted by 25 years of rock music, louder than any

human being can stand it. There's nothing greater than a big-band playing soft."

One important aspect of this music is its variety. Some pieces are straightforward, even boppish, and these are mainly ones used by Mingus's 1962 small-groups on airshots such as "O.P." and "Monk, Bunk And Vice Versa". Plus some of the charts known to have been firmed out to other writers are fairly uncluttered, like "Please Don't Come Back From The Moon" (scored by "Phil" — probably Phil Moore), "Peggy's Blue Skylight" (arranged by Melba Liston who may also have done "Nourrogg", now re-christened "Noon Night") or "The Children's Hour Of Dream" (composed by Gene Roland from an idea by Mingus). Also relatively simple are Charles's early score of "Body And Soul" for the Hampton band, his version of "Wolverine Blues" (!) and "Freedom", with its poem read here by Jerome Richardson.

The same cannot be said of what appeared in the programme as "Untitled Ballad" and turned out to be an embryonic fragment of *The Black Saint And The Sinner Lady*. Or the somewhat related introduction, wisely omitted from the Town Hall album, to "I Can't Get Started" which contains many other pitfalls along the way. Or, indeed, two small-group items, the previously unknown "Moods In Mambo" and "Percussion Discussion", which is a chamber orchestration of the stunning 1955 improvised duet by Mingus and Max Roach. You don't have to agree with the many musicians who say privately that Mingus should have studied arranging before doing his large-scale works. But it's easy to see that, if he had written music ten per cent easier, he might have got 100 per cent better performances.

There was a lot of goodwill here, with players such as George Adams, Bobby Watson, John Hicks and John Abercrombie reading these difficult parts and waiting for their brief solo spots. I treasure the memory of John Handy advising Schuller on one tricky piece ("Well, I recorded it with him") and visiting-critic Stanley Crouch handing strips of sellotape for Sue Mingus to stick together Victor Lewis's drum part. There were also eerie reminders of the fateful 1962 concert, the biggest problem by far being the amount of music to be copied and the mistakes resulting from the last-minute log-jam (I write with feeling, because the delays with the actual dots were a cliffhanger not only for the performers but for the TV team I was working with). Jimmy Knepper, who was soaked in the jaw by Mingus because of the first-time copying difficulties, declined to take part but turned up like Banquo's ghost at the untogther dress-rehearsal, saying "I made the right decision". And the last number (a re-take/encore requested by Schuller) was halted in mid-stream by stage staff, just as in 1962, to avoid overtime costs.

As often happens, though, an untogther dress-rehearsal had produced a superior on-the-night performance, as will be proved by the TV transmission (Channel 4, 5 August) and a probable double-album on CBS. Something not to be missed, I'd say, but then I would, wouldn't I? ●

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London Jazz Composers Orchestra

LONDON
LSE OLD THEATRE

DENNIS Gonzalez, all the way from Texas, came over to RD Cook at the end: "Exceptional music," he murmured, nodding. Although what was once artless boho austerity has become a little touched with grey over 20 years, these 16 players come together under Barry Guy's direction with admirably fervid concentration. They look very white, male and middle-aged. But they don't play that way. If that means anything.

Over two nights the LJCO, an all-star collective of the players who took inspiration from Ayler in the 60s, were performing four pieces, two new to this country: "Polyhymnia", "Harmos", "Study" and "Double Trouble" (the last originally a double concerto for two pianos and the LJCO and Globe Unity Orchestra combined, boiled down on this occasion to singles all round – one piano, played by Howard Riley, and one orchestra, played by the LJCO).

All the pieces use composition to punch a scaffolding into improvisation, although the ratio of scoring to free varies. While this often implies something along the lines of "Song For Che" – rich, simply-arranged, quasi-Latin brass songlines, cut with florid, raucous blasts of squawking – what's significant about the LJCO's years of intermittent exploration is that they've so broadened this resource.

It's hard not to end up making lists. Among others, Peter McPhail, Trevor Watts, Evan Parker, Radu Malfatti and Paul Rutherford soloed, throwing up fiery shapes over protean, convoluted masses of sound, or lyrical cutlicues over rigid blasts, or whispered nothings over near-silence. Bass-players Guy and Barre Phillips were the magnetic poles that all the sound-filices were strung between. Paul Lytton, without his Martian headgear, was patterning out a friction-ground for the whole to move over.

But the point isn't individual contributions, it's collectivity; and the fact that in nearly four hours of music, tension never flagged, invention never failed, sonority never repeated itself without a point to make. "Harmos" worked itself up round simple tunes. "Study" laid down long, draggy pitch-overlaps, ragged tidal calms for storms to erupt through. "Double Trouble" seemed to create out of mayhem an ephemeral blend of Jean Barraque's hysterical tone rows and Villa-Lobos's frenetic cha-cha-cha.

Orchestral improvisation isn't spiralling slowly down into mid-life crisis – if there's a problem, it comes in transmission. Who was here to hear them? They're playing as well as anyone in Britain (far better, when it comes to ensembles of this size), and no one who didn't already know was checking them out. I suppose we could put that down to club-snobbishness, or market pressures, or just plain ignorance. Eleven years ago, Globe Unity played this hall, and that was historic. Twenty-one years ago, Albert Ayler played his only show in Britain here, and that was historic. For two nights, the LJCO pushed the envelope out into deep and provocative reaches of musical intelligence – and too few were there to follow. All it means is

that someone's going to have to do it all over in a decade's time.

MARK SINKER

David Murray Trio

LEICESTER
PHOENIX ARTS CENTRE

IN THE late 70s, the David Murray Trio with the wonderful Sunny Murray on traps explored the frontiers of freedom and rarely played time. It's a mark of the late 80s that the saxophonist's current trio explores the tradition and almost always plays time. It would be churlish to indulge too much post-modernist angst on the contrast though – the energy and mastery of David Murray's conceptual saxophone are redirected but strong as before.

The trio features Ralph Peterson Jr on drums and (replacing Fred Hopkins) Ray Drummond on bass. It soon looked like it might be a duo though – Peterson battled with a monitor overbalanced with bass, gestured repeatedly at the sound engineer and looked as though he might walk off. Murray's own "Morning Song" staggered to a conclusion. The hardy perennial "Flowers For Albert" got a ferocious up-tempo performance, Peterson rancorous. But the Ayler tribute proved to be the furthest out of the series of dedications. The lush harmonies of "Chelsea Bridge" (Ben Webster) couldn't be comprehended by the limited instrumentation even of this trio, though the otherwise quite impassive Ray Drummond did cackle at a change of direction in his own solo. Things (sound included) were more settled in the second set, which featured marvellous slap-tongued bass clarinet, and concluded with the B-flat bebop blues "Billie's Bounce". (If it wasn't in B-flat, it ought to

have been.)

This is not yet the most perfect of David Murray's trios. There was a roughness not always implied by the demands of energy and volume (this band sure plays loud). Ralph Peterson has great ideas, always used the theme and exploited the full resources of the kit (chattering against the cymbal-stands, chattering on the rims, beaters, hand-drumming). But youthful abandon sometimes overmastered control. Ray Drummond's bass needed more resonance – something hard to get with the pick-up on the bridge rather than the soundboard. (He might as well be playing fretless bass-guitar.)

So perhaps the most satisfying offering was Murray's *a cappella* number "Lester" – as fine a piece of rhapsodising as any by the saxophonist. A falsetto of piercing pure harmonics, followed by great slithering glissandi with huge, flattened howlings. The question "Why so sad, Pres?" here remained unbearably poignant, only half-answered. A look back at tradition, but with integrity.

ANDY HAMILTON

Roadside Picnic

PARIS
NEW MORNING

I HAD the feeling that British jazz doesn't travel all that well – set our top men up against the Americans on their home turf and suddenly all that messianic copy doesn't seem so accurate. But Paris ought to be another matter. Anyway, Roadside Picnic aren't set up to take on cutting-contest situations. This is a group with aspirations far beyond the post-bop regimen of much new Anglo-jazz, beyond even the more amiable pastures of new fusion. If I say that they could

PHIL WACHSMANN (top) and BARRY GUY, pulling strings at the LJO. Photo ANDREW POTHECARY.



grow into the most significant British band of their time – at least, among those who are playing instrumental music with a jazz bias – then I perpetrate a press officer's deadwood cliché. But I think it may be true. Here's why.

Let me say something about New Morning first, though. It's a big, slightly seedy, faintly spooky place. It probably seems like a close Gallic cousin to a club like The Mean Fiddler, say, when it's packed and jumping. But this was a quiet night in terms of punters.

Still, the modest crowd seemed to respond with some alacrity. I can't imagine a British audience coming in cold to a group like this and being quite so hospitable. Several London venues could also learn from the drinks policy: none served while the band is on, so no noise from the bar. A huge and somewhat dishevelled statue of Billie Holiday beams over at the stage – she looks like a ship's figurehead in this pose. Like I said, a little eerie.

Roadside Picnic took it all in their amiable stride, melowed by a couple of days of Parisian *politesse* but as zealous as ever in the way they deliver their sets. They have a confidence in their material which seems to let them play above themselves. Mario Castonari's themes may look no more than interesting on paper, yet Roadside turn them into miniature movies, episodes where you hear detail and power moving together.

I suppose "You Get Wet Sleeping In The Park" was a feet-finding opener, but thereafter they played it hard and enthusiastic. "Morning Song" followed by the atmospherics of "Cairo" had the group right on its toes. Hearing these scores live, I keep waiting for atrophy to set in – they must have run over the points-changing many times in rehearsal for the record, after all

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– but it doesn't seem to happen. Dave O'Higgins usually has a fresh solo, and John Smith has revised most of his keyboard voicings, thickening the "Cairo" veil and bewowing some distant thunder when it seemed appropriate.

Smith and drummer Mike Bradley deserve more attention. The keyboard player has a scholarly mien – he looks as though he'd rather be playing Scarlatti – and the thoughtful bent extends to his choice of sounds and directions. He took a solo on "New Canterbury Tale" that was an irresistible reminder of Don Preston playing mini-moog with Frank Zappa. Some of his segues between keyboard parts are a trifle messy, but better than the soulless precision of conventional jazz-rock. Bradley comes on like a less flashy Bill Bruford, pattering at some electronic bits and pieces but mostly cracking out a hard line between jazz and rock rhythms.

O'Higgins continues to show some of the best saxophone form of the moment. Like every sensible technician, he tries to trip himself up in certain fast passages – you think you hear the obvious continuation coming up before the saxophonist turns off the path. He used technology with particular aplomb at a couple of points, embellishing part of a solo with some sort of octave divider but switching it off before the effect lost its intrigue. His clean, hard tone suits the group without seeming too bland.

The best thing about Roadside, though, is the group itself. On the pivot of Mario

Castonari's bass and compositions – and the tunesmithing shouldn't overshadow his considerable, gutsy presence as an instrumentalist – the band are refining a very personal kind of fusion. The clear execution of line is remarkable, but their grasp of dynamics sets them apart. On the "jam" section of "Cairo" they found a groove that could have licked any soft fusion group we have over here without locking into the admittedly often exhilarating riffing that attracts most people to this sort of music.

I wouldn't want to make comparisons with Weather Report or other historic giants of the genre. Roadside Picnic may be as ambitious, but their music has a UK modesty somewhere inside it, a humane touch. It's not quite the thing to conquer world markets, which may be a bit of a problem for RCA Novus. Or is it? The French were whistling and roaring for more, anyway. In two new pieces, "Sometimes I Get So Very Sad And Lonely" (a full-tilt charge) and "Steef (Steve 't) At The Beach", the group are already digging into deeper, more aspirational territory than their LP provides. If you're not listening, you're missing one of the most valuable bands we have.

MIKE FISH

La Monte Young

LONDON
UNION CHAPEL ISLINGTON

EVER SINCE I first discovered minimalist music, I've been captivated by the *idea* of La Monte Young: his elusiveness, the unavailability of his works on record, the extraordinary grandiosity of projects such as his Dream House and The Theatre Of Eternal Music. At times he seemed to embody some creek's mythical idea of the "Father Of Minimalism"

(as he was dubbed in the Almeida Festival programme) so perfectly that I was convinced he must be an invention. The prospect of finally seeing him in the flesh was therefore too exciting to pass up, although the concert – as I might have predicted – ended up combining fascination and catatonic boredom in just about equal measure.

The first half consisted of the *Five Small Pieces For String Quartet* (1956) – pleasing *homages* to Webern, full of patterns and whispers – followed by seven piano pieces which were performed by Yvar Mikhashoff (complete with fetching eyepatch). These ranged bewilderingly from student pieces (the lilting and impeccably tonal *Prelude in F Minor*, the *Sarabande* in which Young now detects "an enigmatic strange beauty") to the *Three Piano Pieces For David Tudor*, playful works written for Fluxus group concerts after Young had come into contact with the ideas of Cage in Darmstadt. The most famous one involves the piano being fed on stage with a bale of hay and a bucket of water. Mikhashoff carried it off with suitable gravitas, but it felt (since this was already an audience full of converts) more like a trendy in-joke than a well-aimed kick up the backside for the concert hall ethic.

After the interval we had the *Tris For Strings* (1958), the first of Young's compositions to consist entirely of long sustained tones. Played here (by members of the Arditti Quartet) in its original scoring for violin, viola and cello, it lasts for about an hour – the duration of the first note alone being four-and-a-half minutes. Most of it falls within the dynamic range of *pppp* to *p*, and there are frequent lengthy pauses, so the impact was seriously weakened by the unwelcome thunder of Victoria Line trains passing (with unaccus-

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comed regularly, it seemed) beneath our feet. But I heard more than enough to conclude that it held more in the way of historical importance than entertainment value. You could say the same thing, probably, for most of the music written by this remarkable man

JONATHAN COE

Dennis Gonzalez Fred Ho

LONDON
SEEN ON THE GREEN

THE SUN glinted on the emerald viscosity of the Channel but duty called so, taking one last sniff at La Manche Verte, I nobly waved aside the blandishments of Brighton and headed back to London, hitting trendy N16 in time to hear the last half of Steve Williamson's set. It sounded good, not least because of Gary Crosby's always excellent bass playing.

Next up was the act I'd been deputised to review. A saxophone duo may not be the most appropriate programming for an outdoor festival but Fred Ho and Hafez Modir offered a strong performance which had no trouble coping with the various distractions on and around the Green. The sound was clear and crisp as baritone and tenor snaked around each other in a collection of originals drawing on Persian, Japanese and (in "When The Sun Rises The Sky Turns Red", a two flute tribute to the martyrs of Tiananmen Square) Chinese folk melodies.

The baritone can be a truculent rhino of a horn; it looks heavy and ungainly with piggy eyes, but never forget how fast it can turn and savage a passing tune. Ho's sax snored out riffs, pecks and snuffly songs, then would wail sinuous lines, graceful, even dignified, with

the tenor paying court or snatching fragments of melody for festooning across the baritone's path.

On the Sunday night, good old Dick Heckstall Smith's new DHSS (geddit?) showcased his splendidly earthy tenor and gritty way with a blues, witness his version of Coltrane's "Equinox". After this, compere Mark Hewins, whose guitar synth interludes from the wings between bands had gone somewhat unfairly unheeded, took the stage proper to work with Dennis Gonzalez. The band was completed by Paul Rogers and Mark Sanders, a superbitch of a rhythm section. We're more used to hearing Rogers and Sanders in freer contexts but tonight they demonstrated as tough a beat as you could wish, occasionally sweeping Hewins into roaring, snowballing climaxes which would explode on impact with Gonzalez's darting bass. At other times Gonzalez would hover over a scrab of scuttling rhythms, stretching sweet'n'sour, out-of-tempo lines alongside falsetto skits from the guitar synth.

BARRY WITHERDEN

Michael Brecker Group

GLASGOW JAZZ FESTIVAL
THE TRAMWAY

DURING THE interval of this very long concert, following an almost absurdly eclectic set from the Louis Slavin Quintet, a colleague posed a question I have often asked myself: why is Michael Brecker, of all the contenders in that generation of superbly gifted saxophonists, the one who has been chosen for such public adulation? And adulation is the word - Brecker had Glasgow exiting out of his hand right from the furious opening skit of "Itsyhynne Reel" on the

EWI.

Listening to the set, my answer remained the same. Brecker allies a formidable technical genius, possibly the most complete of his generation, to a musical conception which is simultaneously impressively exciting and relatively undemanding on the listener. Time and again, Brecker demands that we acknowledge the fact that he is a monster saxophonist, possessing a marvellous richness of tone and an incredible facility in getting around the horn.

Against that, he travels firmly down the centre of the post-Coltrane highway, taking no time to explore the by-ways visited by the likes of Dave Liebman, far less anyone more left-field than that. It can be hugely entertaining, but doesn't always hold the attention: ultimately, there never seems to be anything of real substance lurking behind the high-gloss bravado of the music. What you hear is what you get, and Glasgow undoubtedly liked what it heard.

I didn't quite make up my mind about the *Sclavis* band. The leader is clearly an extremely gifted player, especially on bass clarinet, while his soprano saxophone work on the lengthy and rather tedious closing suite was breathtaking, retaining precise articulation and control of phenomenally fast strings of notes. The band's music ricocheted all over the place, however, and on a first hearing, made less sense than it might with repetition. The idiom spanned a rock-like rhythmic directness to the anarchic freedom of European improvisation, Stravinsky to sampled jingles, all

delivered with fearsome energy and much electronic maltreatment of sound. Despite reservations, I would like to hear more.

KENNY MATHIESON

Earthworks

LONDON
ROYALTY THEATRE

I'VE ENJOYED the Earthworks records, but this show wasn't much fun. In the studio the group secures a deft and sometimes exciting truce between Bill Bruford's technorock rhythms and the more jazz-directed playing of Django Bates and Ian Bellamy. Bates, in particular, sorts out his ideas to particular advantage on *Dog*. Most of that detail and balance was messed up at this show.

Inevitably, everything sounded faster and louder than on record, and virtuosity began to swamp the music. This seemed to excite an audience full of reformed Yes fans - two gentlemen behind me gave a whoop at every incredible trick turned by the imperturbable Bruford - while doing very little for the tunes. Much of the set seemed to be a kind of private joke between Bruford and Bates, with the keyboard player wheeling and twisting impossible licks through the cervices in the drummer's beats. Django's tenor horn playing, though, gets better all the time. A couple of solos were really gripping. Then they did that shocking schoolboy-prank version of "Downtown" (actually, Bill, Perula Clark didn't compose that one).

It's a waste of Ian Bellamy, who spends most of his time standing round grinning; he never fits in the way David O'Higgins does with *Roadside Picnic*. An eventful evening - probably too eventful.

RICHARD COOK

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A uncle in time ORPHY ROBINSON, as seen on the Green. Photo by ANDREW POTHECARY



Still Life With Guitar in 45/8

Coming up-to-date
with the fretboard
master, who tells
Mike Fish how
much his memory
costs.

Photo by
Andrew Wood.

"I'M SITTING at home. The phone rings. Hello? Hello, this is Steve Reich."

Pat Metheny felt his jaw drop. Like the country round his birthplace in Missouri, Metheny is still unspoiled territory. When Reich asked him to perform and record *Electric Counterpoint*, the guitarist felt honoured. It was probably a bit easier for him, though, when he heard the composer's first question: how do you tune the guitar?

"Now, I wish I'd played it better. About the fifth overdub in, I sort of got it. My idea at the start was, OK, I want to play this piece in a looser way, not in an exact metronomic way. In retrospect, though, it would have been much easier if I'd played it straight up and down. I ended up having to compensate for all my earlier rhythmic variations as the flow of the piece grew. It got a bit messy around the seventh or eighth overdub. Which actually Steve liked – maybe that's why he chose someone like me to play it as opposed to a classical guy."

The disciplines of Reich's overdub extravaganza aside, Metheny has been busy since he last spoke with this journal (*Wire* 43). He loves to tour – he must have been on the road at least a year to support the *Still Life (Talking)* album – and the Pat Metheny Group has spent the early part of this year recording his next instalment for Geffen, *Letter From Home*. It's scarcely a departure from their last few records – all the leader is looking for in the way of change is "more resonance, more detail" – so it's almost an hour of picked textures, ripe melody and blue-sky jazz-rock. Even the 55 seconds of "45/8" are important in the context of the record.

"That's literally in 45/8, a bar of 23 and one of 22, and they alternate. That was written when I was heavily into my threes and twos thing. I don't think you can get away with more eighth notes in one bar. But the truth is, we needed something that wasn't in a minor key, after four tunes in a row that were either C minor or G minor or D minor. OK, we're in sharp keys for a minute!

"A lot of the best music is hard, but I think we make it sound easier than it is. The first tune goes from seven to four, back and forth, and '5-5-7' is a bar of five, a bar of five and a bar of seven. There's a weird rhythm at the end of each chorus in 'Spring Ain't Here', which is like a 4/4 bar with an

indecipherable rhythm – it's like the 32nd note of beat two followed by this triplet of . . . I mean, I don't know what it is!"

LUCKY FOR him that the synclavier system can handle much of the technical detail. Pat has two, maybe three dozen guitars at his disposal, but keeping it all tied up with the synclavier system is a costly business.

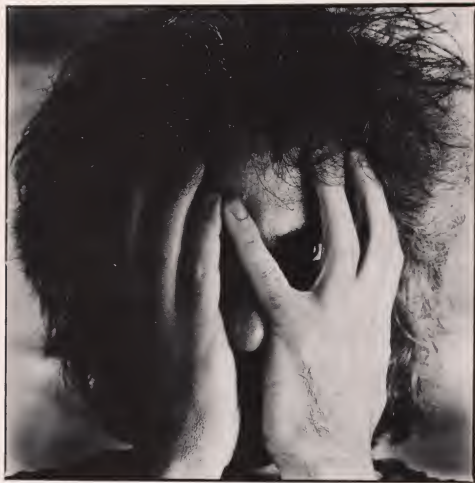
"And it's for really stupid things. Like memory, which doesn't do anything – it just sits there and holds what you've got. But it's really expensive, like a thousand bucks a megabyte. I need it all, though. I need more than the system is capable of giving me at the moment. I'm just a junkie for the stuff."

Metheny says his biggest problem is time, or the lack of it. A conversation with him is always an unhurried business, but a lot of people ask for his time. He finally appeared on stage with Ornette's Prime Time last year – "It was burning. We went all the way out and back." He would love to do a trio date with Ornette and Denardo Coleman. While he agrees that Prime Time records are less than faithful to the band's sound, "I thought the last record was good. It was also a real statement from Denardo – he did some real cool, ultramodern stuff in terms of production decisions on that record."

Besides that, there is an intriguing-sounding new trio set for Impulse, done with Herb Hancock and Jack DeJohnette – live tracks embellished by a plethora of synclavier material. Metheny says he's never heard another record like it. While some guitarists, such as Stanley Jordan and Michael Gregory, "one of the best cats I've ever heard", are looking towards a techno-soul direction, there are Scofield and Frisell on the left, Metheny himself somewhere in the middle. Pat reckons this is a tremendous time for the guitar, and it's hard to disagree.

Expect the PMG to be in your neighbourhood again in the autumn. Meanwhile, just like two summers ago, their new record will be an agreeable soundtrack for the long evenings. It's obvious, though, that Metheny is itching to go out and play some more. Or just to check out someone else.

"Is there anyone I should be going out to see tonight?" he asks, looking at the door.



true

blue

Richard Cook looks back

at 50 years of

blue-and-white labels

and checks out five

albums that document

the Blue Note story.



THE FINEST in jazz since . . . I'm not sure I'd always agree, but I'm not inclined to argue. Blue Note has always been eminent, but it's something I've tended to respect from a distance. When I began listening to this music, Blue Note seemed like a strange, far-away territory, an unfamiliar name.

I collected records before I started listening to jazz, and the labels I knew were ones like HMV, Columbia, Decca, Parlophone, RCA. I never saw any Blue Note 78s or 45s, and the albums were dark and heavy things, pressed on ultra-thick vinyl and sleeved in cardboard you could build huts out of. If I ever saw a cover such as *Newk's Time* or *The Amazing Bud Powell*, it would have looked dour and unwelcoming (this was in those far-off days when 50s sleeves, or 50s anything, didn't represent a paradigm of hip).

Since then, Blue Note has been sanctified with a credibility that now looks invulnerable. Ten years ago, a vast shipment of Blue Note cut-outs arrived in the London jazz shops, most of them sold off for two or three pounds each. A lot of us built a basic Blue Note collection out of those Liberty pressings. What that shipment must be worth now is frightening to imagine. Older editions of those records—original New York pressings, with the light blue and white labels, or even the ones with the address (Lexington or West 63rd) on the label—usually command price tags that can send a chill through your bank balance. When Paul Murphy and Colin Curtis began playing these records in clubs, another area of black music acquired the deeply collectable status that had previously

bombarded Northern soul, Motown and blues records. Seasoned jazz collectors knew all along how scarce much of this stuff was; suddenly, it seemed like everyone else did too.

WHAT MADE the label become so sought-after? The thing about Blue Note was how hard-core it was. Hard bop never got harder than Art Blakey's *Mosaic* and *The Big Beat*; soul-jazz was never hipper and wittier than Horace Silver's *Song For My Father* and *The Jody Grind*; organ jazz never burned better than Jimmy Smith's *House Party*. Even the new thing achieved its greatest mystery in Andrew Hill's *Point Of Departure* and Cecil Taylor's *Conquistador*. And then there were unclassifiable, stormy masterpieces such as *Out To Lunch* and *The All-Singing Eye*. These were all Blue Note records, with their baroque, ominous sleeves and a studio mix that sounded like the musicians were playing inside a tightly-lidded pressure cooker, the walls soaked with condensation, the drums bearing down over the piano, the horns socking out of left and right speakers.

Nothing seemed to have been stunted on in the pursuit of blackness (or blackness, as Roland Kirk used to have it). There were no prissy oboe and flute dates as you might find on Contemporary, no telling your top man that he might do a ballad date or back up a singer (Coltrane on Impulse). Art wants to do a 15-minute "Night In Tunisia"? Sure! Andrew would like a session with two bass players? Book the studio! No wonder Alfred Lion and Francis Wolff seemed like the



Always: HORACE SILVER

Below: BUD POWELL

"A Night In White," *Three Blue Men* performs at the jazz fest.

(L-R) HANK MOBLEY, PAUL CHAMBERS, ART BLAKEY



resident saints of the recording scene. Even when they had Ike Quebec do a samba album — the lovely, whispering *Soul Samba* — it hardly seemed like a cash-in on a local craze.

It didn't last, though, and nothing was ever quite as uncompromising as it seems. The "purest" period of Blue Note was between 1939 and 1956, when they released comparatively few records and the catholicity of the label was genuine and marked by unflinching standards: Sidney Bechet, Fats Navarro, Bud Powell, Thelonious Monk, early Miles Davis, James P. Johnson, Clifford Brown. These are my favourite Blue Notes. When Lion and Wolff sold the label to Liberty in 1966, the content of the company wasn't so much diluted as ironed out.

It was fashionable for a long time to see that change as the death of Blue Note; the pendulum has swung right back, with the jazz-dance interest in the later boogaloo music of people such as Lou Donaldson and John Patton. Actually, the change was not so dramatic. Lee Morgan, Hank Mobley and Jackie McLean went on much as they had done before, with little sense of their music being watered down in any real way. There's a deepening in Morgan's art, for instance, which Blue Note was still registering as late as *Live At The Lighthouse*, and McLean's albums with Charles Tolliver are arguably more compelling than some of his earlier post-freedom albums for the label. Wayne got weird, but he was getting a bit odd anyway; Jackie and Dexter and Sonny had left altogether.

Blue Note wasn't simply selling itself out; its greatest period had basically run its course, with hard bop wiling under the onslaught of rock and jazz casting round for a commercial alternative. Liberty merely tweaked the label a little. The sleeve shot for Hank Mobley's *A Caddy For Daddy* — a leggy white girl astride a mobley bonnet — is a country mile from that for BLP 1568, where all you see is Hank's shades, the neck of his horn and the huge microphone. But the music held its own. Besides, for all the head-down albums in Blue Note's book, there had always been plenty of chirpnet albums by The Three Sounds, Grant Green and the absurdly over-recorded Jimmy Smith.

The routine of Blakey's and Silver's albums may have been charismatic enough, but it was still a routine. The number of album dates that work as multifarious sessions, as *conceived records*, is comparatively small: *Out To Lunch*, *Point Of Departure*, *Unit Structures*, *Maiden Voyage*, *Speak No Evil*, perhaps a handful of others. Though the label made much of its nurturing of fresh talent, its roster was as inward-looking as ECM's is often accused of being. It's hard to imagine Blue Note coming up with a date as unexpected and unrepeatable in feeling as Oliver Nelson's *Blues And The Abstract Truth* or George Russell's *Jazz In The Space Age*. Blue Note tightened up the blowing format that Prestige had pumped into a flabby impasse by 1960, but the label's house-style could be as claustrophobic as any fast-taste session for Savoy or New Jazz.

IN THE 80s, Blue Note's much-trumpeted resurgence is often more interesting in marketing rather than in purely musical terms. After a decidedly shaky period — how seriously

can you take an operation that has Stanley Jordan and Dianne Reeves as its central new jazz heavyweights? — producer Michael Cuscuna seems to be reasserting himself as a creative force in an enterprise that badly needed genuine leaders to temper its Lite Jazz directions. The newest records by McCoy Tyner, Bennie Wallace, Don Pullen, Michel Petrucciani and Tony Williams look to secure the blend of old integrity and contemporary cross-marketing that a corporate jazz label needs if it's going to make itself a viable part of a major record company.

There's almost nothing one could call maverick on their current books, but that was hardly Blue Note's style, anyway. If Black Saint can run rings round it when it comes to dealing in the most adventurous of new jazz, it's no different to their relationship with a label such as Candid, 30 years before. When you get to be 50 years old, there's some chances you don't feel like taking.

There's not much risk, either, in the five double-albums which the label has compiled to celebrate its 50th birthday. The first, *From Boogie To Bop*, is a rather too condensed shot at covering the early years, moving rapidly from Ed Hall to Hank Mobley. *The Jazz Message* is a decent encapsulation of hard bop, although some of the tunes are idiosyncratic variations on a theme that's difficult to define anyway: Dexter Gordon's "Cheese Cake" sounds offhand, Bobby Hutcherson doesn't really belong here, and Shorter's "Speak No Evil" is a ghostly affair that squirms under its heading.

Funk And Blues, volume three, is for real tyros, with "Blue Bossa", "Song For My Father" and "The Sidewinder", which is getting to be the jazz equivalent of "Mull Of Kintyre". *Outside In*, though, hits an exhilarating peak: the first record is peerless. Eric Dolphy's "Out To Lunch" makes almost everything else in these 20 sides seem like beginners' music, a canvas full of brilliant, unexpected strokes, and when followed by Andrew Hill's deep dark "Black Fire" one wonders at how consistently great Blue Note could have been. Ornette Coleman's "Broadway Blues", a resty dialogue between himself and Dewey Redman, and the strutting ebullience of McCoy Tyner's "Passion Dance" round off the record. The second disc is modern "avant garde", though none of it is as adventurous as the other two sides.

The fifth volume, *Lighting The Fuse*, is where your sympathies either break down or rev up. In isolation, the tracks by Donald Byrd, Noel Pointer and Bobbi Humphrey are groovy enough, but it really is piffing music compared to what's on the earlier records. It's a pity that these samplers end here, with Jordan, McFerrin and Reeves, instead of some of the most recent releases, which take a distinctly harder turn.

This isn't just Blue Note, though, this is jazz in '89. Since nothing else is the same, we can't expect this old label to have stuck by its holiest ground.

The five volumes of the Blue Note Anniversary Collection are available as individual double-albums, double-play tapes or single CDs, and as a limited edition gift box set on LP and CD.

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no, can do

The classic albums by the greatest German band have just been reissued on CD. Bodo Kopp opens the lid on the music in this major reappraisal.

Photo of Holger Czukay and Michael Korte in London, 1989 by Harry Benson

IF THE Can of now tugged on the thread of Time and the Can of then answered, what would they say to each other down the line? This confrontation of past and present selves is an instructive, if somewhat severe test. Youth is a stern judge of elders whose romantic ideals have been eroded by the need to pay the rent.

Can need have no worries on that score. The thread of Time connecting the two will not be singing with tectonics out of the past. Nor will it carry a reverse charge indicting youth for the impossible demands it makes on the future. Unlike almost all their contemporaries in rock, Can never shirked their irresponsibilities. They began and ended with an absolute commitment to improvisation. Of course they had their share of misses, particularly during their lengthy demise, but even the dying embers of a decade's spontaneous musical combustions have fired the imagination like no other.

Exactly how deep they've fired the imagination is evident in the fact that almost all the absorbing rock-related musics of the past decade have been scorched to a greater or lesser degree by Can. You can trace the burns through the heavy rhythm trances of early PIL, the spluttering guitar rages of DAF(mk1), the orientalism of pee-discolated Cabaret Voltaire, the batteries of percussive noise, electronics and possessed voices of Einstürzende Neubauten, the pleasurable rumbles of Swell Maps' more wayward instrumentals, the ethological forgeries of David Sylvian, and so on. Even when you suspect they're more talked about than listened to, the myth of Can as a total aural assault has inspired black sun burnouts by the likes of Last Exit and Loop.

Gratifying as it is to see so many putting the Can legacy to good use, to invoke them as a justification of Can's contemporary standing is entirely unnecessary. The works stand up for themselves, without recourse to such nervous mediation. Their records might be knotted into the thread of Time connecting then and now, but they don't so much remind one of a particular moment as stand out from Time altogether.

Time cannot so easily explain music as powerful as theirs via nostalgic references. Imagine its relief when Can's manager Hildegard Schmidt unknots their records from the thread, slips them in the Time capsule that is the Spoon record label and renders them ever-present through some astute licensing deals. The British independent Mute is the latest beneficiary, having secured the entire Can catalogue for compact disc release. The issue of the first batch of eight is the cause of this celebration.

TWO CANS and a thread? Such primitive communications technology wouldn't phase the Can of then or now. On the contrary, they would relish the challenge of making these limited means sing. From beginning to end Can placed a premium on the improviser's ability to construct music from the tools to hand. It was bassist Holger Czukay's boast that he could make a whole LP with a simple dictaphone, and keyboards player Irmin Schmidt has said that in the end he'd forsake whole computer banks of equipment for the music he

could obtain from an acoustic piano.

Of course, their Can-do approach had something to do with the diverse musical backgrounds they respectively adapted to the demands of the group. Apart from Bavarian guitar player Michael Karoli, Can's four mainstays came to rock relatively late. Three of them had turned 30 before their first recording. Schmidt had trained as a composer and conductor. Holger Czukay had studied the principles of composition with Stockhausen. Drummer Jaki Liebeck's CV in free jazz included stints with Manfred Schoof. They formed Can in Cologne 1968, firstly as Inner Space with the American flautist and electronics composer David Johnson, with the idea of creating a rock vastly different from what they'd been groomed for.

Even as the music leaps out from the Time of its creation, it does so exactly because it grew out of an unsettled, yet extremely fertile period, when the clamour for change in the cities echoed through art. For a very brief moment it really did seem that all kinds of crosscultural demands were being met. Only a year before Can, Cornelius Catdew's AMM had released their first LP through the rock label Elektra. Prague was the scene of psychedelic blow-outs and in New York the Velvet Underground were creating the noisiest rock imaginable by splicing amped-up guitar primitivism, atonality and the minimalist leanings of John Cage.

In Cologne Can/Inner Space doused their first sessions with the spirit of '68 and set it alight. They cut those early tentative rock jams, characterised by flailing rhythm, with tapes of the Parisian student uprisings. (Check the cassette-only *Prehensile Future* 1984 release.) When Spoon later retrospectively released more formative recordings under the title *Delay* 1968, Schmidt would say they deliberately specified the year as a tribute, of sorts, to the French events echoing through its turbulence. By this time Johnson had left and Can's first vocalist, the American Malcolm Mooney, had joined. From this distance the vocal, be it Mooney's or that of his replacement Domo Suzuki, strikes a discordant note, as if the group only included them for the sake of a rock orientation. But on reflection both vocalists coped admirably with the impossible task of improvising parts and lyrics attuned to the Can madness. That said, Mooney's occasional despairing lapse into nursery rhyme ("Little Star Of Bethlehem", or "Mary, Mary So Contrary" from *Monster Movie*) tests the present day listener's sympathy.

If *Delay* had come out in 1968 it would not have reverberated anywhere near so well through its own age as it does through the hollow noises of the present. It would have also diminished the impact of *Monster Movie*, Can's official debut. In the beginning it was more nightmarish rumour than reality. Originally only available in a very limited edition, the reputation of its unparalleled musical ferocity preceded its arrival.

This first shock of Can has not yet fully receded. It informs everything they subsequently did. It begins with a screeching organ phrase every bit as unnerving as the famous, frequently sampled *Psycho* jingle. It's swallowed up in a massive rumbling

explosion, out of the dust of which thunders a rhythm like a chariot wheel studded with bloodied blades. The Can myth might have curdled right here, if there weren't anything more to this music than horror effects.

BUT CAN music represented and represents still a wholly different kind of horror. The nature of its spontaneity beings anyone within earshot right up close to the metaphysical horror of existence, because it is constantly dissolving the certainties of form to reveal the churning chaotic energies out of which it is created. This should be where all rock begins and ends and begins again. Rock was supposed to be a contradiction of terminology and state, a fluxus shape into which anything could be poured and out of which anything might emerge. Can are one of the very few rock groups — in the real sense of the term — ever.

Perhaps their greatest achievement in terms of rock as fluxus state is the double LP *Tago Mago*. By this time Mooney had been replaced by Suzuki, a marginal improvement, if only because his voice could be as chameleon-like as the other Can instrumentalists. *Tago Mago* contains the single most exciting, exciting, intense and remorseless 50 minutes of rock music ever recorded. (Unless you count Lou Reed's *Metal Machine Music*). Originally intended as a single LP, Irmin Schmidt's wife and manager Hildegard encouraged them to add a second more expansive record. And in truth the fun proper begins a third of the way through with the 18-minute "Halleluwah". Founded on a pulverising rhythm recoil almost fussy enough to be mistaken for a fusion riff, it carries the music through a succession of trance states, offset by some extraordinarily percussive keyboard work from Irmin Schmidt, who otherwise modestly binds the piece's disparate elements with chill sound overlays. The following "Aumgn" is an almost comical approximation of oriental temple music elevated into something higher by the cosmic yawns produced by Karoli. "Peking O" resolves the seemingly contradictory tendencies of the two preceding pieces and one of those rare, sweet and always welcome Can ballads, "Bring Me Coffee Or Tea", completes this most astonishing sequence.

Listening to *Tago Mago* is like being present at a protracted birth. It's not always pretty going, but being close to the act of procreation is as wonderful as it is unsettling. Its successor *Ege Beamyssai* is not so far removed in form. Yet, perhaps because it doesn't get far enough away from its predecessor, it is a vaguely unsatisfying and somewhat bleak experience in comparison, despite the momentary pleasure of "Spoon" — a number one hit single in Germany after being featured as the title theme to a Francis Durbidge TV thriller.

THE IDEA that music could and should interact with other media has always been a good one. Pity so few can make it work. The most common of mixed media is the movie soundtrack. In practice, most music for films is composed as an afterthought and is so secondary to the onscreen action it is by definition second-rate. Right from the start Can were

involved in other media, writing and performing music for theatre and film. (And during the interregnum of Can then and now, Irmin Schmidt was in constant demand as a film composer.) Between their first two LPs Can released an intermediate record collecting five of their early soundtracks. Exactly how well music and image are montaged together is unknown, but evident from the *Soundtracks* LP is the fact that the group weren't intimidated by the task. These are assured works that make heavy demands on the accompanying pictures, if they're not to be overwhelmed. Suffice it to say any film that matches the exhilarating flights of Michael Karoli's guitar guiding the composition "Mother Sky" must be quite some film.

"Mother Sky" partly anticipates the group's later shift into eerie soundscaping, where the group's rhythmic motor force seems finally to achieve drummer Jaki Liebezit's desire to reduce his and Czuczay's contribution to Can to a pure pulse. By the time Can recorded their last two indisputably great records *Future Days* and *Soon Over Babylon* in '73 and '74, they'd also improved their studio techniques to the point they could pitch pieces not far above the level of silence and still transfix listeners. "Bel Air", occupying side two of *Future Days*, works differently depending on the volume setting. Played loud it's a tremendous whoosh of pleasure. At a softer setting Irmin Schmidt's glacial keyboards parts freeze the surface into something resembling an ECM winterscape, except in Can's case you're aware of the turbulent forces contained beneath the ice and always threatening to burst through.

Soon Over Babylon is similarly structured so as to draw attention to the sequenced pieces, "Quantum Physics" and "Chain Reaction", taking up a whole side. Paced by Liebezit's racing, then gradually receding pulses, they carry Can to some fixed point in the distance through which they finally disappear . . .

Never to return? To many, myself included, Can would never repeat the achievements of those first seven years of concentrated creativity and invention. The next LP *Landed* has its moments, for sure, some of them even living up to evocative American oriented titles like "Full Moon On The Highway" and "Vernal Equinox". But maybe I'm wrong. Longtime Can watcher John Gill confessed to having his preconceptions overturned about their late period in the sleeve notes to the compilation *Insandescence*. Perhaps the next set of compact disc reissues documenting the last five years up to 1978, when they ceased activities, will force a radical reassessment of work generally accepted to be unfocused extensions of their Ethnological Forgeries series. An alternate happy end: the record Can regrouped to record in 1987-88 will re-open paths into the unknown they abandoned too early in their eagerness to move on to the next and take the music even farther out there.

But it really doesn't matter. As the *Cannibalism* compilation documenting their first, fruitful period shows, Can have already indexed the insatiability of rock and they're the only group to ever get close to satisfying its monstrous appetites. ●

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between soul and jazz territory?*

SINGING IS often dismissed as little more than embellishment, mere gilding of the "serious" musical material. This is insulting to singers who are in fact leading their musicians: artists as diverse as Bessie Smith and Tammy Wynette, Asha Bhosle and Cassandra Wilson are no more "just singers" than Duke Ellington is "merely a pianist".

So vocalists become the voice of raw "nature": why jazz, emerging from the sexist culture of America's nightlife, favours female musicians as singers above all. It goes with the idea of the female as artless and untrammelled, the unmediated "truth" dependent on male technique. In fact, because vocal inflection characterizes jazz instrumental sound, singers have frequently been at the cutting edge. Jazz saxophone had to weather Coltrane's journey to the avant garde to transcend its residue of flippancy and hedonism, summon the emotional weight and moral authority of the classic blues.

If anything, the male jazz vocalist has actually fared worse than his female counterpart. The castration complex assumes that women cannot sport an instrument, but it cannot conceive

interview: ben watson

photo: coney jay





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that a man should want to appear without one at all. Furthermore, rock'n'roll stole the most energetic aspect of the male jazz singer – Big Joe Turner fronting a roaring big band – ushering in an uneasy alliance between middle-of-the-road crooning and harmonic sophistication. Avant garde sax players reasserted vocalized timbre while – paradoxically – eclipsing the singer. The mainstream supported a number of important voices (Sarah Vaughan, Ella Fitzgerald, Mahalia Jackson) but really it was soul and funk that carried the tradition: and reggae.

IN THE 70s reggae assumed social and political leadership of black music, providing a serious, global view of racism and exploitation that soul was too disaffected (and jazz too *scientologised*) to provide. Popular movements require vocal manifestation, and the spokesman status of soul-out-of-gospel fell to Bob Marley. It was no accident that in 1976 Big Youth should cover Marvin Gaye's political masterpiece "What's Goin' On" whilst simultaneously name-checking John Coltrane ("Jim Squashey" from *Natty Cultural Dread*).

Like every innovation in black music, reggae absorbed and overhauled the whole tradition – from guitar blues to the Nigerian griots, big band swing to Rosco Gordon's R&B. The music was massively influential – dub gave birth to hip-hop, reggae provided Africa with a model to relate to American pop (a function James Brown had provided in the 60s) – but the pre-eminence of the vocalist persisted, a legacy of its political emphasis.

In the early 80s, a time when a lull in militancy meant that reggae lyrics concerned themselves with dancelhall wit and lovers' romanticism, some young Londoners of West Indian extraction discovered the seriousness of instrumental jazz. Horn players previously confined to horn section chores wanted a chance to *play*. The "jazz revival" had begun.

Reggae did not in fact come from a different world: The Skatalites were steeped in Basie and Duke; Rico Rodriguez (most celebrated for his role in The Specials) covered Lionel Hampton and Calvin Massey in *That Man Is Forward* (1981). Nevertheless, Courtney Pine and company wanted a full-blooded jazz revival, parallel to the Blakey/Marsalis axis in the States. From its position of subservience the saxophone was suddenly king.

Interestingly enough, this instrumental emphasis also attracted a singer: his name was Cleveland Watkiss. Since then, topping two *Wire* polls, he has been almost the only visible singer on the scene who is not using jazz as an excuse for summertime sambas and supperclub soul. Like a lot of the Jazz Warriors, with whom he is most famously associated, his roots are in reggae.

"My parents got here in 1955. I lost my father when I was ten, in 1969. It took about four or five years for it to really sink in, the loss. He was a carpenter. He had a sound system. I remember music every night, loud. There were always Ray Charles things around, a lot of reggae obviously, ska, bluebeat. Recently I found out that he was a regular visitor to

Ronnie's: a strange connection me and my brother have with our involvement with the music.

"Somehow we survived all that difficulty. Being black, in London, there wasn't exactly an open-armed reception. I've got a lot of respect for my mother, the way she managed to bring up a family of nine kids."

What possibilities were open for the young Cleveland? Not many, it seems. Music at school?

"Brookhouse Comprehensive? Music lessons? Are you serious? In Hackney in the 70s? In the first year we had saxophones, a whole brass workshop, then in the second year we had nothing. All we had was me banging on tables and imitating sound systems. That was a serious disservice, man. In Hackney there were so many talented musicians . . . the instruments were sold, taken home to the headmaster's house, anywhere but to the pupils. It was, like, Fatman Hi-Fi and that was it, I'm afraid.

"I really got heavily involved during the Marley explosion, and still am. I'm really a lover of that philosophy, that idea of peace, that we're all one – which was basically what he was preaching about. For a period, nothing else existed for me, anything outside of reggae was, like, Go away with that stuff, I don't want to hear it, just give me that bass in my face, loud!"

I ASKED how jazz entered the picture.

"What happened was – a classic story – Bammi Rose had this tape that had, like, Charlie Parker, Clifford Brown, Bill Evans. We were hanging out at Alan Weekes's house. We put it on: "Night In Tunisia" with Charlie Parker and Dizzy and it was, like – What? What is this? And we kept playing it and playing it. This must have been 1980. Next day me and Alan just went round all the record stores – Mole Jazz, Ray's – hunting around, buying loads of albums, not even knowing what or who they were, deciding later if we liked them or not.

"Jazz sounded to me like some new music, to tell the truth – I just accepted it on that level. I didn't know that it was from the 40s – that only came from studying and reading books and really getting involved. All we knew was, like, Ronnie Scott's. I'll never forget this, we saw Sphere. This was about 1982. Charlie Rouse and Kenny Barron, and, man, that music! There was about five or six people in the audience, and I just couldn't comprehend that there was nobody in the place. The music was so rich and potent!"

This was a period of relative isolation. There was a group called Alumni that played in Covent Garden wine-bars (featuring Bammi on sax, guitarist Alan Weekes, Cleveland's brother Trevor on piano, Piper on upright bass and Kenrick Rowe on drums). There was Simon Purcell's Jazz Train, a gig Cleveland values because it enabled him to meet a lot of the musicians who formed Loose Tubes – he is an opponent of the segregation and cliques that break up the scene, talking with enthusiasm of a gig with Chris Barber that turned him on to Louis Armstrong. Then came the phone call from Courtney.

"Courtney told me about the orchestra. I didn't really take



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it seriously. I thought, how many young black players are there – I haven't seen any. To my amazement, there was all these other guys, man. I'll never forget the first day that we met. It was like we were long lost brothers, it just felt like that we'd finally met up again."

Cleveland approves of the spontaneity and risk-taking: "Most of the time there were no parts written for me – I was doubling on the trumpet parts, or flute parts. If someone tells us that to solo on 'Giant Steps' is difficult, we'll say, 'What are you talking about? Just do it, then tell me it's difficult.'"

Cleveland is responsible for one of the most characteristic sounds of the Warriors, a freaky falsetto that twists and swerves, alternately beautiful and mocking, soaring and outrageous. On the record he narrates the dedication "To Our Forefathers' Forefathers' Dreams" (which, given his personal history, has a strange resonance, reminiscent of the theme of Prince's *Purple Rain*) with the necessary solemnity, then in "Minor Groove" engages in a chirruping, squealing duet with Kevin Robinson's trumpet. It is hilarious, but because of its raw spontaneity and recklessness rather than any self-conscious attempt at comedy.

Cleveland's liberated falsetto has precedents in the madcap explosions of bebop scat – a weird collection of artistic outreach and hip gimmickry – but also in the zany vocalese of the Goons (themselves, of course, a product of Soho hip bohemianism) and the cracked warblings of Robert Wyatt. It is as if the distressing racism of the Goons (in which delight in expressive absurdity is flawed by complacent geying of foreign accents – especially of those of the new immigrants, which at this time would have included Cleveland's parents) has been turned upside down: the absurd used as a response to cultural contradiction. This comes to a peak in the single "Spend Some Time", where Cleveland bounces around the voices of rap and reggae and smoochy-soul with a bravado that is both wild and strangely touching. Like Steve Williamson's association with the IDJ Dancers, it tempers Trane's deep seriousness with an injection of street impudence; like Courtney's soprano the tone can also be chilling and thrilling (if more reliably in tune!).

THE REAL precedent, though, for Cleveland's astonishing lack of self-regard, his courage in exploring areas of the voice that indicate tenderness and plain silliness, is in reggae singing – Junior Murvin, Big Youth, Yellowman, Barrington Levi. It is a quality that reggae sax players have (Tommy McCook, Deadly Headley), but which the young Turks, in their enthusiasm for the blood-and-guts of bop, have passed by (oddly enough, it has been left to free improviser Lol Coxhill, of all people, to extend that tradition).

True to his grounding in Rasta's idea of roots, Cleveland does not see jazz as something transcendent, elitist, upwardly-mobile. According to him, the Warriors should be on *Tup Of The Pops*. "The rappers – they're talking some style that goes way back. De La Soul, EMPD, Public Enemy – they're talking about rhythm, the king."

Cleveland's imminent LP *Green Chimneys*, a trenchant slice

of the new jazz with the turmoiling drums characteristic of Warriors' outfits (and appearances by Trevor Watkiss, Jason Rebello and Courtney Pine), is named after a Monk tune.

"Thelonious Monk had it all – humour, intellect, simplicity. There's a story behind the title track, it's the name of the school his daughter Boo Boo went to. Most singers won't do Monk because it's too hard, but I wrote lyrics to it."

The critical establishment receives some tongue-lashing: Oscar Peterson's sleeve-note-writer who "was going on about how this pianist doesn't necessarily go for the fancy hats or smashing the piano with his elbows. I thought, wait a minute, you're making references to Monk! Honestly, I could not listen to this Oscar Peterson album because of the sleeve-notes." Stanley Crouch's condemnation of fusion and free players gets short shrift: "All that stuff on Wynton's albums, man. Honestly, man, please – just give me the music. Don't start telling me all that nonsense."

"I couldn't believe some of the things Ian Carr would say at the Guildhall. He said that Clifford Brown contributed nothing towards the development of the trumpet! He talked about Ornette, man, about him not being a 'school' musician, that he was harmonically 'primitive'. He was surprised that we objected! Ornette studied at the Juilliard, man, here is one man who *knows* what he is doing. He said he was not *school*, 'not like someone like Gil Evans'. I'm sorry, man, I had to leave."

CLEVELAND'S ENTHUSIASTIC, all-embracing view of music is chastened by an awareness of racism – the reception at Ronnie Scott's when he first went down ("they said, you guys must be here to mug somebody, you guys can't be really here to listen to the music because you're black"), the difficulties his brother and Cheryl Alleyne (the Warriors' drummer) are having in getting grants to rake up places at Berklee ("You're from Hackney and you're black – jazz?? Can't give you no money, mate – you've got to live in Kensington! It's that class thing").

The relationship with Polydor at the moment entails a three-month tour with The Who: "We're going to Miami – I've got five days off, I can pop across and go and see my gran in Jamaica who I've never seen. But they play the *blues*, man, that's why I can relate to The Who!"

However, the plan is to use the financial security to establish a working group: "What I'm aiming at is to have guys I can spend six months with, and really get the music cooking, develop something."

It is encouraging that Cleveland relates to pop via the street-wit of "Spend Some Time" rather than the middle-of-the-road adopted by most "jazz" singers with an eye to sales. Favoured with an emorive falsetto you would have to go outside jazz to find (to Marvin Gaye, Donnie Elbert, Jimmy Sommerville), he is committed to applying his skills to interactive improvisation (what we are calling *jazz* at this time). That commitment is indicative of how valuable these new developments in music truly are. ●



MARK MURPHY, just a few years AJ

MURPHY'S LORE

Mark Murphy, born in 1932, has been singing jazz since he was 16. In the 60s he lived in London but since returning to New York in 1973 he has seldom been seen here. Recently, many of his classic albums for Riverside and MCA have been rediscovered by the jazz-decline movement, and Murphy's standing as one of the hippest of post-bop vocalists has been revitalized by a new audience. In this appreciation of Mark Murphy's singular art, Will Friedwald pays tribute to the best vocalist who's never run out of steam.

Mark Murphy, born in 1932, has been singing jazz since he was 16. In the 60s he lived in London but since returning to

"OUR LIVES are divided into two parts, B J and A J," meaning before jazz and after jazz. Mark Murphy explained last October at Far Tuesday's, during a week-long engagement that signified his first real New York gig in as long as I can remember. The observation is only meaningful because Murphy's singing does more than explain, it demonstrates the rhapsodic raptures available to the lucky ones who are "A J".

That was the only time he made his audience aware of any kind of division; cross-genre integration is more Murphy's usual law. Mark Murphy devoted his career to exploring all styles known to jazz long before terms like "eclecticism" and "neo-classical" became hundred-dollar secret words in the jazz press. He's the Woody Herman of vocalists: where most bandleaders developed sounds that could be recognized, as that ace observer Guy Lombardo put it, even before the emcee announced the band's name, Herman, like Murphy, was too intrigued by the endless possibilities of *all jazz* to limit himself to a single "house" style. And like another pioneer eclectic, Rahsaan Roland Kirk, Murphy uses '50s bop as a point of reference from which to head both far-out (post-progressive scat and soundplay episodes) and far-in (blues, ballads, bossa novas).

Perhaps all jazz styles come equally natural to Murphy because it's possible to imagine him, "before jazz". There's nothing the least bit forced about anything he does, still. Murphy comes off like he worked to master jazz's infinitely tricky rhythmic intricacies and become one of the music's most exciting entertainers. As Malvolio distinguishes between those born great, who achieved greatness or had it thrust upon 'em, Murphy gives the impression of having had to achieve natural swing, unlike, say, Nat Cole or Mel Tormé, who were born jazz rhythm virtuosos.

BINGO! THAT impression of distance between Murphy and the music is his greatest advantage: Murphy's genre-hopping doesn't argue for the eradication of familiar styles, it supports their preservation. Sharper than the most astute critic, Murphy comments on the music. True, singing "about" jazz generally makes a pale substitute for singing jazz. A song describing Billie Holiday ("The Lady Who Sang The Blues") offers less insight than when he directly addresses her maternal in two first-rate forays into her overlooked 40s features ("You Better Go Now" and "No More"). And remember that old one-note samba called vocalese? It entailed sticking words on top of classic improvisations that, apart from the witty libretti of Lambert, Hendricks and Ross, by and large only reduced the great jazz solos to shoddy proselytizing (like "Don't you know he's the king of saxophones . . . ?") Murphy is equally guilty when he turns "Boplicity" into the ad slogan "Bebop Lives" on the otherwise perfect *Bop for Kerouac* (MR/MCD-5253), creating precisely the kind of patronising sentiment, however sincere, that composer Miles Davis would detest (and unusual in that Murphy more usually shows an astute affinity for the music of Davis and his sidemen).

Murphy's vocalese ("Moody's Mood") is nothing special and his straight scatting thrills less than his straight ballads ("I Can't Get Started"), but it's his knack for commenting on the commentaries that really rivets. To digress: all interpretation is an opinion, the performer stresses one aspect of the melody or lyric over another because he likes it better, King Pleasure's words to "Parker's Mood" comment on the solo (even though this particular lyric doesn't describe Parker directly), as does Kerouac's depiction of Bird in action in *The Subterraneans*. No matter that both Pleasure and Kerouac have dated while Parker hasn't, Murphy's re-re-interpretation combines the two and surpasses both second-hand sources like a good movie made from a mediocre book (you can't say it approaches the majesty of Parker's own music, but what does?). Another Kerouac recitation, from *On the Road*, in the middle of "The Ballad Of The Sad Young Men" produces an incredibly moving torch song on the level of "Lush Life" or "Something Cool", designed to salt the beer glasses of the generation after Billy Bigelow and dar ole man ribber.

MURPHY CONSTRUCTS other moving statements with the vocabulary of tradition: my favorite pre-Kerouac Murphy album, *That's How I Love the Blues* (reissued very recently on a Fantasy OJCD) delves into 12 completely different blues subgenres (vaudeville to hard bop), and more recently he's expanded on that with excursions into comic R&B (Louis Jordan's "Ain't Nobody Here But Us Chickens", on *Living Room*, Muse MR-5345, though better live on Tuesdays, replete with bonus chicken jokes) and the tune that Handy called the "Memphis Blues" on *Beauty And The Beast*, Muse MR/MCD-5355. Here and in his selecting Nat Cole songs far superior to Cole's familiar hits ("I Keep Goin' Back To Joe's" on *The Nat King Cole Songbook, Vol. One*, MR-5308 or "Blue Gardenia" on *Vol. Two* MR-5320, both being on the combined CD, MCD-6001), Murphy employs a working knowledge of the past that truly works.

And which contributes to an artistic generosity that's thicker than his moustache. The heavy amount (16 albums) of Murphy records and CDs currently in print, ranging from his sixth LP, 1961's *Radi* (Fantasy Riverside OJC-141), to his most recent, *Night Mood* (Milestone M/MCD-9145) and *September Ballads* (Milestone M/MCD-9154), is only the beginning. What other singer would do one show on Thursday night and a completely different set of tunes on Saturday? And who else would give the lion's share of these shows to the songs of jazz composers (even if he has to write lyrics for them), making Tin Pan Alley's better known standards the exception rather than the rule? Or, as on *September Ballads*, be willing to search as far afield from where you'd expect to find a good song as Steve Allen and Chuck Corea to jerk a genuine tear or two?

But no matter what bag he's in, whether he's telling us something new about the past or something old about the future, Mark Murphy takes the verbal literature and makes it bop with as much restless creativity and just plain guts as any six great horn players you could name. ●

Side 1

JAZZ SINCE 1939

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A Letter From Home,

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Point of departure: ANDREW HILL on his Blue Note days

Plus: JAM GARBAREK, COLD SWEAT, KENNY GARRETT, RANDY BRECKER, LOTSA LATIN /

WORLD SAXOPHONE QUARTET RHYTHM AND BLUES

(Elektra/Musician CD 60864-2)

Recorded: New York City, November 1988
For The Love Of Money; Let's Get It On; I Heard That,
Loopology; (Suits) On The Dock Of The Bay; Messin'
With The Kid; Try A Little Tenderness; Nonesuch; Night
Train
Julius Hemphill (as); Oliver Lake (as, as); David
Murray (ts, bc); Hammett Blauvelt (bs, ac).

COLD SWEAT

COLD SWEAT PLAYS J.B.

(JMT 834426-1)

Recorded: New York City, November 1988.
Brown's Prayer; Give It Up Or Turned A Loose; It's A
Man's World; I Got The Feeling; Brown's Dance;
Showtime Medley; Please, Please, Please; Try Me; Cold
Sweat
Craig Harris (tb, vcl), Eddie E. Allen (tr); Booker T
Williams (ts); Kenny Rogers (as, as); Clyde Cramer
(ky), Fred Wells (g); Brandon Ross (g); Alton
Gardner (b); Kweyaa Agayon (perc); Damon
Mendes (d); Kenyatta Abdul-Rahman (perc); Arthur
Blythe (as); Olu Dara (c); David Murray (ts); Sekou
Sundiata (vcl).

BOTH THESE groups are exploiting vital and closely-related areas of development in Afro-American music. Craig Harris' reworking of James Brown songs uncovers the singer's roots in forms of Black artistic expression that are to be found in abundance on *Rhythm And Blues*. The title of this World Saxophone Quartet set is more a statement of good musical policy than an historical pigeon-hole. Whether it's the soul of "I Got The Feeling" or the blues of "Night Train", this is the music that must be heard as a product of the Black American's struggle against oppression, and therein lies so much of its energy and passion. Qualities which the World Saxophone Quartet have always been able to harness with a remarkable degree of cohesion. Each member is an accomplished arranger with his own individual style, but the most interesting lines are usually penned by Julius Hemphill. In his arrangement of "Let's Get It On", the horns begin their counterpart with something approaching droll sloth, before moving on to a more piping chorus. The individual parts drift away from each other, meeting occasionally in odd harmonic places. Fascinating "Loopology" (a Hemphill original) and "Messin' With The Kid" are, similarly, tightly woven and intriguing pieces. The majestic discipline that the group has cultivated (especially on the

Ellington album) has never stifled the spirit of free interaction.

"For The Love Of Money" is a typically punchy Oliver Lake affair which dissolves into a raucous four-way debate. As you would expect this is a power performance from the WSQ and it's completed beautifully by "Try A Little Tenderness" courtesy of David Murray, who cradles the melody gently and then breaks off into a long cadenza; grabbing fingers full of lower register notes and throwing them up into the stratosphere.

Cold Sweat have a different kind of soul. It's hard and funky, because that's what you have to be to understand James Brown's music. His songs were not overtly political, but the assertiveness of lines like "I don't want nobody to give me nothing, open the door and I'll get it myself" are hard to ignore. Under Harris' direction, this



small army of players certainly conveys the great rhythmic dynamism that's needed. "Showtime Medley" is an amiable jog through some of the great man's material with each fragment lasting from 40 to 105 seconds. It's full of hardworking horns, funky bass lines, and tight-acted guitar chops. Harris is mostly out front, blazing like an enraged bull elephant. There are fine bluesy and rocky guitar solos from Fred Wells and Brandon Ross respectively. The Tailgater is more subdued on "It's A Man's World" where the steady wash of keyboards supports the smooth trombone and a rather dull solo from Arthur Blythe.

The killer cut has to be "Cold Sweat". A wild mass of uncontrolled horns jostles for position; gathering for the off. David Murray breaks loose over the get-up-and-boogie groove, squealing into the highest register

with searing accuracy. Harris is equally gymnastic before being swallowed up by another *Axiom*-like squall from the whole band. It's all a sweet and tender blast.

ROLAND RAMANAN

AGNES BUEN GARNAS / JAN GARBAREK

ROSENFOLE - MEDIEVAL SONGS
FROM NORWAY
(ECM 1402)

Recorded: Oslo, Autumn 1988.
Jensrud, Rosenfole, Margit Og Torgeir Rinnvold, Monfrer
Mi Frase, Vendite, Stolt Ole, Sagen Lene, Lullabær Og
Snoober, Grudde, Ulfed
Agnes Buen Garnas (v); Jan Garbarek (ss, ts, ky,
perc).

ROSENFOLE ISN'T a standard-issue medieval reconstruction; nor is it a standard-issue Jan Garbarek album. Agnes Buen Garnas is a folksinger from rural Telemark; her versions of traditional songs of the region - not quite "medieval" except in the sense of centuries-old oral transmission - are placed in a variety of musically-polyglot contexts by Garbarek's restrained multitracked arrangements. His saxen aren't often in evidence; percussion (both real and artificial) and electronic keyboards dominate, in combinations often reminiscent of Jon Hassell's experiments in multi-ethnic music. On the title track the saxes even recall Hassell's harmonized trumpet sound.

Garbarek's drumming is impressive in range and technique, veering from South Indian to Middle Eastern, and occasionally European, instruments and rhythmic styles, including almost industrial-sounding samples on "Lillebror". But these mostly gentle sonic environments never overshadow Buen Garnas's voice, which floats through them, a haunting, archaic presence serenely unaffected by the smoothed-out intonation of the instruments. She embellishes the songs only sparingly, but even in the 16-minute "Margit", new life is constantly infused into the chain of verses by ceaseless variation of the subtlest nuances. The melodies themselves have a dignified simplicity; the temptation is to say a chill Nordic air - the problem is that any appreciation of the songs' expressiveness must remain incomplete (for me at least) since no translation of the lyrics is provided. All the same, the surprisingly alien sound of old Norwegian exerts a fascination of its own.

The whole album has a sense of craft and commitment about it which demands respect, although in the end the precise, endlessly renewed inflections of Agnes Buen Garnas's voice would have been powerful enough on their own. Whatever the intentions of the duo, there is in the result an element of laundering out directness and stridency in favour of soft-focus ingratiation – of which this music and (especially) this voice are in absolutely no need.

RICHARD BARRETT

JAZZ RENEGADES

FREEDOM SAMBA
(Polydor Urban)

Recorded: London.

Up In Jon's Flat, Blues On The Beach, De It The Hard Way, I Know I Know, A-Pe-A-Su, Making The Move, Manobo Blues, Even Street, Man Gio, La Caravelle, Freedom Samba.*

Paul Lacey (t), Alan Barnes (as, ts, bar, b), David Newton (ky), w/g gc; Alec Dankworth (b), Steve White (d), w/k (perc); Sarah Jane Morris (v) on "Do It The Hard Way".

JAMES TAYLOR QUARTET

GETORGANISED
(Polydor Urban 839 405)

Recorded: London.

Grooving Home, Electric Bongoes, The Strachy, It Doesn't Matter, Touchdown (Riding High?), Breakout, Brothers Batwade, Blatford, Bona Pilate.

Guy Barker, James McMillan, Laurence Parry (t), Lawrence Cottle (b), John Wallace, Steve Williamson, John Willmott (saxes), James Taylor (ky), Paul Carr (g), Lawrence Cottle, Robert Gordon, Steve Walters (b), Steve White (d), Chris Jenkins (perc), Cleveland Watkiss (v). (Collective)

CLEVELAND WATKISS

GREEN CHIMNEYS
(Polydor Urban 839722)

Recorded: London.

Green Chimneys, New Born, Is-Wah-Du, To A Songstress, The Sea The Sky, Pass In Bost, A Song For You*, Seeds Of Sin, Inevitable Dream*.*

Paul Edmunds (t); Courtney Pine (as); Steve Williamson (as, ts); Jean Toussaint (ts); Becki Mieleku, Simon Purcell, Jason Rebello (p), Paul Hunt, Simon Wolf (b); Brian Abrahams, Martin Francis, Clifford Jarvis (d); Cleveland Watkiss (v). (Collective)

* on CD & MC only.

OUR EDITOR continues to castigate me for my frequent references to Great Gigs of the 60s, but I confess to finding it difficult to resist nostalgia and reminiscence when most of the

so-called New Jazz draws its style, format and ideas from the late 50s and early 60s. It goes without saying, I hope, that hard bop and every other historical genre retains its vitality regardless of later developments, but I still feel a certain unease at the spectacle of talented young men and women determined to mimic in calculated detail the innovations of their grandparents' generation.

The music itself is, of course, usually very pleasant, it's the attempts to convince the punters that revivalist jazz is in some way cutting new paths that is so infuriating. Once one has forced one's ears to divorce what they are hearing from the evolutionary context these three records can certainly be recommended, especially to their obvious target audience.

The most interesting – though not necessarily the most fun – is Cleveland Watkiss's

side is quickly salvaged from its twee tune by glittering piano solo, on "Sea/Sky", leads into a fine tenor solo that wells up through a quote from Trane's "Cousin Mary" then paraphrases the theme before feeding a cue for Watkiss to work from as he skirts around some Leon Thomas yodels and fences with the piano. I mustn't let praise for the reedmen edge out the other good things, such as the commendable bass solo on "New Born".

The leader's best work is on "Puss", supported by some deftly-placed, well-chosen piano chords, and "Seeds", which is probably the best overall performance; Watkiss is highly inventive and the tenor solo, building from ringing basic phrases to more complex figurations in a controlled and well-paced manner, is one of the most impressive things on the album.

I said Watkiss's release was not necessarily the most fun; my vote on this count would go to the Renegades and James Taylor. I always get a big laugh out of the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, garnering Brownie points for Spotting the Influence; here's a pseudo-Seurat next to a sham-Chagall, and, oh look, there's a bit of Bonnard. *Freedom Samba* and *Getorganised* are much like this, though technically a great deal more accomplished than the RA's displays. To start you off the bands give some clues in the track titles, so I'm sure they won't mind my giving you a few more pointers; see if you can spot "Milestones", "Couldn't Stand The Weather", "Little Suede Shoes", "Shaw Nuff", "Love For Sale", "Ecclesiastics", the JB's, H Silver and the *I-Spy* soundtrack.

Both albums feature nice drums from Steve White and amongst a lot of sturdy bass playing Steve Walters may just have the edge. There's some tough tenor from Williamson on "Bluebird" and Barnes blows a lot of very convincing sax on the Renegades set, which is full of pleasingly plump ensembles, easy piano, and a lot of nimble solo work. In a blindfold test I would have identified more than one sax player here, especially on alto. This is either evidence of versatility or of Barnes not having found a consistent identity, an entirely personal voice. No matter, all the guesses are enjoyable, assuming your abhorrence of lachrymose does not exceed mine. Taylor's is the most approachable of these albums, but the Renegades win out on substance.

BARRY WITHERDEN



collection. My listening experience of Watkiss has been a bit of the proverbial curate's; his voice can be impressively agile, his style clever but sometimes lacking emotion. Flashy insubstantiality remains typical of a lot of New Jazz, but there is ample evidence on this album that some of its exponents are willing and able to inject a little more of themselves (rather than virtuosic recreations of their heroes) into their music as well as their pronouncements.

The programme is not entirely free of trickiness; "The Sea The Sky" and "Seeds Of Sin" are pretty irritating themes, the kind of thing that middle-aged would-be hep-cats were so fond of in the 50s. But most of the writing and soloing is very good; the saxophone contributions in particular are excellent, notably some smoky tenor on "Is-Wah-Du" and "Puss". The opening track of each

PAT METHENY

LETTER FROM HOME

(Geffen 924 245-1)

Recorded NYC, spring 1989.

Have You Heard, Every Summer Night, Better Days Ahead, Spring Ain't Here, 45/8, 5-3-7, Beat 70, Dream Of The Return, Are We There Yet, Violala, Slip Away, Letter From Home.

Metheny (g, synthesizer, triple); Lyle Mays (p, acc, synthesizer, t); Steve Rodby (b); Pedro Aznar (v, g, m, u, churango, melodica); Paul Wertico (perc); Armando Marcal (perc).

SINCE PAT Metheny is one of the most energetic and musical performers to be consistently working closer to interior-design pop than to improvisation, the question of whether or not each of his new albums will find him rising above his chosen surroundings or slipping resignedly into them is a periodic cliffhanger. Metheny's most forgettable mannerisms are bound up with his unique strengths. The drifting, harmonica-like theme statements, the dense, woolly, meekly-accented solos, the country tinges that at their most unexpected are his compelling calling-card but otherwise serve to make his sessions seem as opportunistic a sampling of current Americana as the soundtrack to a petrol commercial – but they can also be the ingredients that at times he exhilaratingly turns inside out.

Except where Metheny makes an emphatic choice for improvisation (like the collaboration with Ornette on *Song X* or the sparkling *80/81* with Mike Brecker) he always hovers on the borderline of MOR but his continuing fan-like admiration for the jazz tradition and the apparently equal blend of Ozark country sounds, mainstream pop and bebop that make up his tastes constantly prevents him from straying too far over it.

This is by no means one of Metheny's sharp-end records, consisting as it does of a good deal of that arching, Latin-based vocal style (often delivered in unison with the lead instruments) that sounds like a cross between Stevie Wonder and the Gilbertos; blowing sections largely reserved for the soft, burry tone of the electric guitar and to a much lesser extent for Lyle Mays' Jarrett-like piano, and not a few rather sugary arrangements of the electronic orchestra to compound obvious resolutions with emotion-jerking climbs into the bargain. Much of its first side depends on that relaxed and lazy shuffle that so often propels Metheny themes, the opener carrying a

strong Mike Brecker imprint on it but with the horn sound appropriated by Pedro Aznar's voice, the mid-tempo "Every Summer Night" featuring Metheny at his most glossily Wes Montgomeryish – but most of the side is thematically unmemorable, apart from the fiesta-like "45/8", which sounds like a peal of church bells but exasperatingly only lasts for 56 seconds. "5-3-7" however, is a different story, its piping ensemble work reminiscent of the Metheny classic "As Falls Wichita" – and since it uses more complex metres, it forces Metheny to accent harder in his own playing, drawing out of him his strongest soloing on the session.

But it was the second side's fast Latin/country piece "Beat 70" that really woke me up, followed by "Dream Of The Return", a startlingly operatic ballad sung in Spanish by

and Eindhoven, 25 October, 17, 19 and 21

November 1988

Quarrying At The Box, Nite Buter, Breakfast With Vincent, Tenderfoot's Honeymoon.

Jim Denley (f, pvc, ss, v); John Buncher (ss, ts); Marcio Matos (cl, ds, digital sampler); Chris Bum (p, perc).

THE MODUM QUARTET

THE MECHANICS OF SYMPATHETIC RESONANCE

(BTT Tapes BTT 3)

Recorded: Sheffield, 21 December 1988 and 4

January 1989.

Chloride, Artificial Vowels, Compound Semantics, In the Close, Wines In Engineering, Zenmaster's Calculators, Results Of The Interrogation.

Derek Saw (cl, sax, ss, as, ts, perc); Charlie Collins (f, cl, bcl, ss, box, perc); Mary Schwarz (vla, v); John Jansoch (g, mand).

THE COMPANY style and approach to free improvisation is often regarded as a yardstick by which others are compared, although such comparisons do not always favour Company. Their use of what has been described as a "conversational" style can lead, as in any conversation, to aimless rambling and nothing of any moment being said. Balanced against this are the advantages of Company's approach; true spontaneity and unpredictability, and the absence of the portentous grandiosity sometimes found in free music ensembles whose membership is unchanging and/or have a rock or classical background.

Recent years have seen Company's itinerant membership move away from the original collection of British and European specialist improvisers to include people from an ever-widening variety of backgrounds, musical experience, cultures and countries. This is risky, but is the kind of risk Company thrives on, and, for democracy fans, Derek Bailey appears on only two tracks of the present CD.

The opening sextet of this 70-minute live recording is particularly enjoyable, having an almost classical poise, smoothness and propriety, largely brought about by the use of three bowed string instruments (Honsinger here refraining from his usual discussions with self, cello, colleagues and audience) and an ethereal synthesiser backdrop. Even some of the more illogical ensembles, as in "Duo" – featuring just Noble and Phillips – are effective. Here "percussion" equals kit for much of the time, as opposed to kitchen utensil lunacy, and this duet shows that an acoustic rhythm section can



Aznar, and the rhythmically punchy funk of "Are We There Yet" That makes *Letter From Home* about 50 per cent happening.

JOHN FORDHAM

COMPANY

ONCE

(Incus CD 04)

Recorded: London, 12-17 May 1987.

Snow, Don, You I, You II, Quartet

Lee Konitz (ss, as, ds); Carlos Zingaro (vn); Tristan Honsinger (cl); Richard Teitelbaum (ky); Derek Bailey (g); Barry Phillips (b); Steve Noble (perc, bugle, sw) (collective personae).

EMBERS

LIVE

(ACTA ACTA 3)

Recorded: Birmingham, Amsterdam, Rotterdam

provide a lengthy, exciting and musically successful work-out in this context.

"Quarter" is tradition-orientated lineup of saxes, double bass, drums and keyboards results in an extended free jazz session using the kind of direct approach and aggressive vigour not always associated with Company, alongside passages of subtle beauty and delicacy. This is some of the best and most successful music by Company that I've heard in some time; free music with shape, beauty, power and a real sense of purpose and being.

The music of Embens is a gritty, aggressive, fidgety business. Despite the length of the tracks, just four in an hour, there is little use of stasis or development; all is tension and flux. The wide range of instruments and their use results in some very colourful and unusual timbres and combinations. There is perhaps too much variety here. This tape is an unsettling musical experience – exhilarating, exasperating and exhausting.

The Modum Quarter's tape is like some of Company's less inspired offerings. Taken as a whole the music is shapeless and inconsequential. Despite or because of the members' varied backgrounds (including rhythm and blues, bluegrass and Company), their individual contributions rarely seem to coalesce into any unified shape or direction, but neither is there the manic melting-pot activity as employed by Embens. However, one awaits developments as there are moments here of enjoyable collective and individual playing, and any band sporting a bass saxophone cannot be completely ignored!

STEPHEN HOLMES

– these are the virtues of the pianist from the Dominican Republic on his first LP for a major label. Two different trios are featured – side one includes the impeccable Marc Johnson on bass, side two offers a more Caribbean mixture with master conguero Mongo Santamaría on one track (but no, I'm still not convinced the congas repay a lifetime's study).

Michel Camilo was conservatory-trained in his native Santo Domingo, and studied at Juilliard when he moved to New York in 1979. He played with Tito Puente and later joined the Paquito D'Rivera group, recording two albums. He also cut two discs as leader with a Japanese label, but has still been rather a well-kept secret up to this release for the new CBS Portrait label. His credits also include work as soloist and conductor with various symphony orchestras, among them the

is prolonged for several more minutes, with drum-breaks, etc. Which maybe goes to show that formal perfection shouldn't be looked for in heartfelt good-time music like this. Let's hope CBS don't push this artist in a (euphemism) "more contemporary direction". He's great just as he is.

ANDY HAMILTON

RANDY BRECKER QUINTET LIVE AT SWEET BASIL (SONET SNTF 1011)

Recorded: New York, 18–20 November, 1988.

Thrifty Man, Tang Chang, Hardly Gurdy, The Master Factor, Incidentally, Myse

Randy Brecker (t, flt); Bob Berg (ss), David Kikoski (p, syn); Dieter Ilg (b); Joey Baron (d).

HAVING MADE their pile in fusion, the brothers Brecker are currently out to prove their jazz credentials. The trumpeter-playing half made his intentions clear on his last release, the studio set *Is The Lidon* (Denon), and takes up the same kind of vein this time around, albeit in a more rumbustious fashion.

That is largely down to the changes in personnel; only pianist Dave Kikoski (whose nicely restrained touch offsets the horn duo's more robust approach) survives from the quintet which recorded the earlier set. Bob Berg's full, strong tone dovetails well with Brecker's own, but he lacks the subtlety and genuine invention which the great Joe Henderson supplied in the previous band, while the rhythm section of Ilg and the very busy Joey Baron, who seems to be everybody's first choice these days, seems less classically idiomatic, and certainly less spacious, than the Ron Carter/Al Foster pairing.

The result is a hard-driving modern pop set, with Brecker's own marvellously burnished sound and flawless technique standing out amid the bustle. His writing is quirky enough to keep the music from turning into just another blowing session, although there is an element of grandstanding here and there which, while doubtless highly exciting inside Sweet Basil, doesn't come over as convincingly on record.

Brecker himself is not guilty of that; he is playing in a pared-down style these days, a long way from the cascading fistfuls of notes which characterised his work with The Brecker Brothers. It suits him just fine, and if – again like his brother – the musical ideas which



National Symphony Orchestra of the Dominican Republic.

All the numbers on his eponymous album, except Kenny Dorham's lovely "Blue Bossa", are by Camilo. Side one is more straggle-ahead, and doesn't quite come alive (the tunes are not so interesting). The second side is where the fireworks happen – Latin rhythms tug and pull, the pianist's brilliance is especially stunning on the closer, "Caribe". This is, the sleeve says, "a tribute to turn-of-the-century Caribbean piano style" (if that's right, must investigate more of this stuff). Camilo's multiple percussive lines seem to take on the timbre of the steel-band. It's a wow. One little criticism though; after what you'd take for the out-chorus, some dissonant chords introduce a brilliant sudden *pianissimo*, a great opportunity for a dying-away ending. Instead, the number

The Company CD is available from two Records 14 Discs to Read, London E5, the Embens CD from Acta Record 318 Chiswick Road, London W4 3AA, and the Modum CD from BTT Tapes 43 Hatfield town, Shiffield S6 3AR

MICHEL CAMILO MICHEL CAMILO

(CBS Portrait PRT 463330 1)

Recorded: New York, 30–31 January and 1 February 1988.

Swift Sandrine Part 1, Nostalgie, Dreamlight, Crissnade, Sunset (Interlude/Sans Sandrine), Yarey, Pre Vax, Blue Rasta, Corale
Camilo (p) plus (first five tracks) Marc Johnson (b); Dave Weckl (d); (rest) Lincoln Jones (b); Joel Rosenblatt (d); Mongo Santamaría (perc on "Blue Bossa").

BRVURA, EXCITEMENT, physicality, brilliance

CLEVELAND WATKISS

GREEN CHIMNEYS



JUNE '89

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HAVE YOU HEARD · EVERY SUMMER NIGHT · BETTER
DAYS AHEAD · SPRING AIN'T HERE · 45/6 · 6-8-7
BEAT 70 · DREAM OF THE RETURN · ARE WE THERE
YET · VIDALA · SLIP AWAY · LETTER FROM HOME



Pat Metheny

Letter From Home

New Album

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come across don't always match in invention the majestic technique with which they are delivered, he is still a constant pleasure to listen to. My preference, though, remains with the earlier set.

KENNY MATHIESON

AMERICAN JAZZ ORCHESTRA ELLINGTON MASTERPIECES (East-West 91423-1/-2 (CD))

Recorded: New York, 21-23 November 1988
Sepia Panorama, Johnny Come Lately, All Too Soon, Ko-Ko, Chloé, Bejaque, Cotton Tail, Warm Valley*, Subways Of New York, Main Stem, Jack The Bear, Take The "A" Train, Concerto For Cootie, Congo Brava*, Rockin' In Rhythm* (* CD only)*
John Eckert, Virgil Jones, Bob Millikan, Marvin Seamon (t); Eddie Bert, Jimmy Knepper, Benny Powell (tb); Norris Turney, John Purcell, Bill Easley, Danny Bank, Loren Schoenberg (reeds); Duck Katz (p); Howard Collins (g); John Goldsby (b); Mel Lewis (d).

STAN TRACEY ORCHESTRA WE STILL LOVE YOU MADLY (Mole JAZZ MOLE 13)

Recorded: London, 6 December 1988.
I'm Beguine To See The Light, Mood Indigo, Blue Fantasy/I Let A Song Go Out Of My Heart, Sloop, Look And Listen, Festival Junction, In A Sentimental Mood, Just Squeeze Me, Lay By
John Barclay, Steve Swell, Guy Barker, Henry Lowther (t); Malcolm Griffiths, Chris Pyne, Geoff Perkins (tb); Peter King, Jamie Talbot, Alan Skidmore, Art Themen, Phil Todd (reeds); Stan Tracey (p); Roy Babbington (b); Clark Tracey (d).

THE FATE of improvised jazz is at least straightforward: it's either recorded, or it isn't, and that's the end of the matter. The occasional attempts one hears to copy Parker, or Armstrong, or Young, note-for-note, are clearly artificial flowers and interest, I take it, practically nobody. With written or pre-set music, however, the problem is much more difficult. And in the case of Duke Ellington, the greatest composer and arranger in jazz, and one of the icons of 20th century music, the dilemma becomes acute.

One school of thought proposes that Ellington's work should remain in the living repertoire just like Bartok or Stravinsky, to be interpreted and reinterpreted by each succeeding generation. Among the most ardent advocates of that view are the American jazz

Orchestra (conceived and directed by the eloquent critic, Gary Giddins) and their new record, *Ellington Masterpieces*, makes the case for the new-performances-of-old-jazz-classics approach about as well as it can be made, and also highlights its drawbacks.

First, praise where it's due: these recordings get very close to the sound of the early 40s Ellington ensemble. I was surprised. Not only are the section sounds remarkably similar, but even the rhythmic feel is almost tight. The trouble is, of course, that wherever there is a difference, the original is incomparably better. This "Ko Ko", for example, is a shade flaccid; you miss the sublime snop and zing of Ellington's own 1940 version. Certain pieces, furthermore, are unimaginable without particular musicians. Ben Webster's sound and phrasing are an integral part of "Sepia Panorama" and

must be not an exact copy of an original Ellington musician, but the kind of player the Duke himself might possibly have used. Like Jimmy Knepper, in fact.

Admittedly, some tracks of *We Still Love You Madly* work well. "Sloop, Look And Listen" is brisk and convincing with Henry Lowther and Guy Barker on trumpets, and Chris Pyne and Malcolm Griffiths on trombones; and Peter King is good on "Sentimental Mood". But too many fall apart for the album to be an overall success.

To maintain Duke's music in the living repertoire, I suspect, is going to be a difficult and delicate task. He is, after all, not an easy act to follow. He may even be an impossible one.

MARTIN GAYFORD

NORMAN HOWARD SIGNALS (Homeboy Music 1, cassette only)

Recorded: Cleveland, Ohio, November 1968
Soul Brother Gossar, Barn, Baby, Burn, Hallowed, Bag Out, Dog Black Mystery, Soul Reformation
Norman Howard (tr); Joe Phillips (as); Walter Cliff (b); Corey Mallap (d).

THIS is a real discovery - a 1968 session led by trumpeter Norman Howard, whose only other foray into jazz history was as partner to Albert Ayler on the epochal *Witness And Devils* (aka *Sports*) LP of 1964.

Howard grew up on the same Cleveland block as Ayler, played with him before and after the great tenorman's army service and, together with other Cleveland avant-gardists such as Charles Tyler and Earle Henderson, moved briefly to New York when Ayler began to cause a stir there in 1963. But, after recording *Witness And Devils*, Howard, presumably rebuffed by the widespread hostility to the New Music, returned to Cleveland and little is known of his subsequent career.

According to Roy Morris, who has set up the Homeboy label specifically to release this cassette, Howard sold the tapes of the *Signals* session to George Coppers of the Dutch Osmosis label in 1980, when Coppers later changed his mind about releasing the music. Morris stepped in and bought the tapes because, he says, "I truly believe this music is too good and too original to remain hidden". At present he's only been able to fund a first run of 100 cassettes, but if these sell out he plans to



"All Too Soon". To hear Loren Schoenberg do a Webster impression on these numbers merely underlines how irreplaceable Ben is. To my ear, this album only comes to life when the soloists forget about imitating the 40s Ellingtonians, and instead, as Jimmy Knepper does on "Johnny Come Lately", play something of their own.

Stan Tracey and his musicians do not run into problems of imitation on *We Still Love You Madly*, but often have the opposite difficulty. The rearrangements are good - in the Ellington vein, but not an impersonation - and Tracey himself, of course, sounds partly Duke-like at the keyboard. But some of the other soloists, Jamie Talbot and Alan Skidmore for example, are simply too far from the Ellington tradition for the music to sound coherent. To make this balancing act work, it seems, you

produce a second run, he also hopes to release a session by the same quartet which was recorded for ESP but which, like *Signals*, never made it to the production line.

All thanks then to Roy Morris for saving this music from oblivion, but what exactly do we have here? A first reaction is that *Signals* sounds uncannily like *Witches And Devils*. Howard has become more confident, more dramatically assured in the interim, but his staccato jabs and scabbling flurries are immediately recognisable from the earlier record, while altoist Joe Phillips recalls many of Ayler's mannerisms without matching the tenorist's ability to abruptly catch fire or soar into flight. *Signals* also explores very similar emotional territory to *Witches*: whether frenetic scurries like "Soul Brother Genius", digres like "Haunted" and "Bug Out" or the hymnic "Soul Resurrection", all the tunes here derive almost evenly from facets of Ayler's music.

Yet *Signals* can't be dismissed as a mere copy. Howard's music has a power and presence that nag me into uneasy admiration. In Val Wilmer's *As Serious As Your Life*, Earle Henderson recounts the stunning impact Ayler's music had on Norman Howard and himself, and it's as if Howard has been blasted to the soul by the power of Ayler's vision, so possessed by that music that he's made it his music too. The irony is that by 1968 Ayler had moved on to explore new sounds, while Howard apparently remained haunted by *Witches And Devils*: trapped even, because there is desperation here, a claustrophobic, hermetic feeling, as if this was music at the end of its tether, anxious to find an exit, to rise above itself.

Morris, in his sleeve notes, likens this feeling to prayer and talks of Howard "blowing dreams through his trumpet". I wonder if these are dreams or pleas to be released from the nightmare of racist America; are they praying or sinking to their knees in despair and frustration? "Burn, Baby, Burn" – a very *an* Aylerish title – at least argues an acute awareness of the repressive forces gathering around black political and artistic expression in 1968.

But I'd hate to turn this into a guessing game. All I can say for sure is that *Signals*, if not quite the stuff of legend, is still able to move and unsettle 20 years on. Morris thinks Howard became a Muslim in the early 80s, but has no idea of his current whereabouts or state

of being. Let us hope the trumpeter is alive and now at peace with the ghosts – holy or otherwise – he grapples with on this long-neglected music.

GRAHAM LOCK

*Signals is available from Honeyday Music, 24 Riverside Gardens, Newport
Tay Fife DD6 8NQ, Scotland. Price US \$ 21.95*

RALPH PETERSON QUINTET V

(Blue Note CDP 7 91730 2)

Recorded: New York, 19/20 April 1988.

Enemy Within, Mouse, The Short End Of The Stick,

Savins 6; Viola's Dance, Beholdworthy

Terence Blanchard (tr); Steve Wilson (ss, sb); Geri Allen (p); Phil Bowler (b); Ralph Peterson (cl).

Get a joyful noise here if you want it. Six



self-sufficient carnivals of sheer ebullience. Well, five really, if you don't count "Viola's Dance" which is the slow one, but even here it's slow-powerful rather than slow-tentative. Even "Savins 6" draws on these resources, despite its subject matter: there's another kind of joy to be found in the courage of such convictions.

Peterson himself describes the creative background to each composition in the sleeve notes, and not just at the emotive level but also with reference to their rhythmic structures – unsurprising since five of the pieces bear his name as composer, but his approach to this invites some rewarding speculation on how being a drummer influences composition, arrangement and, by extension, bandleading. There seem to be certain musical predispositions evident in Peterson's writing which carry

through into many other drummer-composer-leaders' ways of working, from Raul Shanon Jackson to John Stevens. The main melodic elements avoid gratuitous complexity – informed by drum tunings, perhaps? There's a favouring of unison or near-unison horn parts which state themes clearly and without clutter – a melodic analogy of rhythmic statements? There's also an almost uncanny implication of big band orchestration, with each soloist as a section. It's this last aspect which confirms the wonderful *expansiveness* of this music – but there's no feeling of empty space left by the process. Rather, Peterson simply drives all these elements forward with a roll here and a ride cymbal there, time signatures like 17/8 notwithstanding. Whatever his motives – and I'm certainly not questioning them – what his Quintet delivers is as shoe through with creative perfection as it is resolutely idiomatic.

Having said all that, it's easy to get happily lost in such theorising – although Peterson also implies that he'd encourage this line of thought, looking as he is to "... further the cause of drummers as leaders, not by leading with drums, but by leading with a high level of musicality". I'll buy that.

TOM CORBIN

GEORGE GERSHWIN PORGY & BESS (EMI EX 7 49568)

Recorded: London, February 1988.

Glyndebourne Chorus, London Philharmonic, Simon Rattle (cond); cast includes Willard White (Porgy); Cynthia Haymon (Bess), Damon Evans (Sporting Life).

FROM MONTEVERDI onwards, opera has felt the periodic urge to rub its figurative nose in the metaphorical dirt, shifting its focus from heavenly ideals to the baser failings of mere humans. The most famous example is Bizet's *Carmen*, which caused uproar for daring to deal in the tempestuous emotions of a woman who *worked*. Following Bizet's lead, Italian *erisms* composers strove for a realism which went against the grain of opera's tendency to opulence.

But Bizet's Spain wasn't so much an exotic geographical location as an imaginative site which stood for everything a bourgeois audience failed to understand, even held in contempt. Far from being realist, *Carmen* was a fantasy work – which doesn't, of course,

diminish its emotional power. Far from it.

The serious impulse is what led George Gershwin to set *Porgy And Bess* on Catfish Row, whose black inhabitants could, in Gershwin's imagination, embody everything – the vices, the virtues, the violence – which his presumed white, middle-class and etiolated audience needed to shake it out of its complacency. The setting also provided a musical vocabulary – jazz, blues, gospel – with which Gershwin could renew the idioms of opera and the musical, which, in 1935, both stood in need of new blood.

So *Porgy And Bess* is not a realist portrait of black lives; like *Garmoe*, it derives its success not from a recognisable portrait of 'low' lives, but from its success in dramatising emotion through music – precisely the *dramma per musica* which opera's earliest practitioners were after. In this, Gershwin is one of the supreme 20th century composers; and in Simon Rattle's new recording, *Porgy And Bess* receives its definitive operatic performance.

Rattle conducted pretty much this cast in Glyndebourne's 1986 production, which no doubt contributes to the intense commitment. This, despite the score's jazz inflections, is an unrepentantly operatic performance – which doesn't displace memories of more cabaret-derived interpretations. There are losses in an operatic approach; but if opera singers lack jazz flexibility, some jazzier performances tend to displace emotional precision in favour of an all-purpose vocalise. Faced with the sheer power of Willard White's Porgy, or with the lush (and sometimes too loud) orchestral depth of the London Philharmonic, doubts about the validity of operaticising the work quickly dispense: in the end, this is the recording Gershwin would have loved to hear.

NICK KIMBERLEY

**STEVE LACY 4
MORNING JOY (LIVE AT SUNSET
PARIS)
(HAT ART CD 6014)**

Recorded Paris, 19 February 1986.
Epiphany; Prospectus; Wickets; Morning Joy; In Walked Bud; As Usual
Steve Lacy (sax); Steve Potts (ss, as); Jean-Jacques Avenel (b); Oliver Johnson (d).

**STEVE LACY
THE DOOR
(RCA Novus 3049-1-N)**

Recorded: Paris, 4 & 5 July 1988
The Door; Ugly Beauty; Cliches; Forgetful; Blinks; Virgin Jungle
Steve Lacy (sax); Steve Potts (ss, as); Irene Aebi (vln); Bobby Few (p); Jean-Jacques Avenel (b, sanza); Oliver Johnson (d); Sam Woodyard (d).

THE FIRST disc is a CD-only release which features Lacy's regular band minus piano live in a Parisian club. I used to think Lacy was an idiosyncratic old fogey but I've wised up now and the music exemplifies much of what's interesting about his work. The Monk tunes are respectfully but individually treated and there's a nice variety among his own themes. "Prospectus" has a cheerful quasi-calypsio air; "Wickets" is more subdued, academic. "Morning Joy" is a mordant pleasure like many of the *Fatantasia* songs and "As Usual" is a dark teetering tune with a sub-Pink Panther glaze to

STEVE LACY



it.

The more I hear Lacy the more I think of Booges the writer on the one hand and Jacques Tati the comic film director on the other: the self-constructed cerebral but playful world of the one and the dignified, observant, clownish wit of the other. Against which Steve Potts is such a foil, of course. His alto is always blistering, full and vital with a muscular push which, depending on your point of view, could either make him seem gross or Lacy seem like a pipsqueak. Behind them, a fine supportive rhythm pair who are constantly inventive and whose solos, Avenel's in particular, show a willingness to make Lacy's universe their own.

The Door is different and would make an excellent way into Lacy and an interesting listen for the aficionado. Not that his playing here is any better than on many other albums;

it's the variety of settings on one record that make it such a treat.

There are three pieces with his regular quintet, with piano. "Blinks", though played as neo-bop, is a particularly excellent example of the fascinatingly catchy moebius strip-like structure of his songs. "Virgin Jungle" is a septet with Irene Aebi added on violin and Sam Woodyard on drums. It shows Few in Ellingtonian mood and Lacy at his spikiest and most crotchety. Woodyard, who died a couple of months after the recording, gently mallets his toms, rolling and packing pitches.

"Cliches" is one of two duets, this one with Avenel playing sanza in Tanzanian style, Lacy using the more metallic and playful end of his range, catching like a kitten at the rhythmic intimations of the sanza's interlocking lines. "Forgetful" is the other, with Bobby Few on piano. Lacy sets his tone to warm and nostalgic but always with that characteristically tart edge that keeps sentimentality at bay. Nevertheless, there are one or two moments where it could almost have been Zoot Sims. A fascinating album even if it doesn't feature Lacy's most intense playing. Knock on it!

STEVE LEWIS

**JACK WALRATH
NEOHIPPUS
(Blue Note CDP 7 91101 2)**

Recorded NYC, 19 and 21 August 1988.
Village Of The Darned; Watch Your Head; Flight Night; Anna Lee; England, Born! (CD only – *Fatantasia Revisited; The Smell Of The Blues*)
Mr Walrath (tr); Mr Jefferson (ss); Mr Williams (p); Mr Cox (b); Mr Burridge (d); also, Mr Abercrombie (g); Mr Margiana (as).

BUYING THE CD of Jack Walrath's latest is a little like being invited to a party and not being introduced to anyone. The liner notes are a little enigmatic on who does what, and the implication is that we'll know already.

The dominant sound, apart from Walrath's visceral brass, is John Abercrombie's curiously orchestral guitar, which fits the overall conception far better than seems possible. The two sax players (one of them with the chutzpah that comes of a stint with Miles) squabble over some awkward charts but in the main the mood is upbeat, even jovial.

There's a weird Addams Family vocal at the start of "Watch Your Head", the well-established "Beer!" has its own splendid head, and the opening, oddly classical "Village Of

The Darned" combines folksy elements culled from Bartok's American phase with a solid R&B core.

The two best tracks are the CD 'extras' What'll they think of next? Not giving you the last two chapters unless you have a really nice reading lamp. "Smell" is a terrific number, sure to be covered.

Walrath's odd obsession with Boris Karloff (*Master Of Suspense* is the Blue Note debut we're all presumed to own) resurfaces on "Fright Night", allegedly the first Gothick jazz tune, and the first to exploit fear. Um...

Will you play a little faster said the Walrath to six snails. The trumpeter nudges the band along perhaps too obviously. He's brutally exposed on the ballad "England" without a comfortable grasp of slower tempos.

If I remember aright, neohippus was a dumpy ancestor of Sheerag...

BRIAN MORTON

MATTHEW SHIPP & ROB BROWN

SONIC EXPLORATIONS

(Cadence Jazz Records CJR 1307)

Recorded: 19 November 1987, 14 February 1988.

Sonic Explorations, Sections 1-6; *Oleo*; *Blue In Green*. Rob Brown (as), Matthew Shipp (p).

THANK HEAVEN that, amidst the M-base funksters and Knitting Factory rockists, there are still a few people in NYC who play real, red-blooded jazz of the freer persuasion. Matthew Shipp and Rob Brown are two young musicians who each lead various groups of their own as well as working in the duo they've shared for the last five years. The influences they list are wildly eclectic, but the common elements - Charlie Parker, John Coltrane, Anton Webern, Jimi Hendrix - hint at the music they make together: an astute balance of intensity and consciousness, with roots in the jazz tradition. You could call it post-modern energy music perhaps, or a freedom dance filtered through the compactness of Webern and the structural nous of the AACM.

"Sonic Exploration" is a suite they've been developing for several years. Though mostly improvised, it has moments of strict notation, is structured in six distinct sections and is constantly being shaped by the players' mutual sense of direction. Though it lacks that edge of desperate uncertainty some people demand from improv, the resulting music has plenty of

surprises and also avoids the cycles of longueur and spasm which so often snag total freedom. Through sections that explore rhythm vamps, extremes of register, melodic counterpoint plus the momentary freakout, Shipp and Brown achieve the extraordinary feat of sounding simultaneously independent and complementary - their cohesion, I'm sure, far more felicitous than fortuitous.

If a curiously jerky "Oleo" raises a few doubts, the tender regret of "Blue In Green" soon allays them: Brown's alto, mostly robust and earthy, cries with a quietly stoic sorrow, while Shipp's flitting touches and bass-note rumbles are reined into somberly melodic mode. It's a touching coda to a record that sings throughout with generous, yet finely-tuned spontaneity.

Brown has a Silkheem LP scheduled with his



trio (William Parker, Dennis Charles), but both these men are names to watch: two free spirits steeped in the jazz tradition who also have the vision and courage to take the music forward. Low-key it may be, but *Sonic Explorations* takes a step into the future.

GRAHAM LOCK

WARNE MARSH

FOR THE TIME BEING (Hot Club HCRCD 44)

Recorded: Oslo, 21-23 September 1987

Can't Give, No Splur, Background Music; For The Time Being (two takes); Everything You Could Be; Kary's Trance; Here's That Rainy Day; The Thing, So So; Topsy; Autumn In New York

Torgun Solland (t), Warne Marsh (as), John Pal Inderberg (bc); Erling Aksdal (p); Bjørn Altheaugh (b); Ole Jacob Hansen (d).

CONNIE CROTHERS - LENNY POPKIN

LOVE ENERGY

(New Artists NA1005)

Recorded: New York, 14 & 21 April 1988.

L.T.; How Deep Is The Ocean, Another Era, Soul In Minor, Ontology; Love Energy; It's You. Lenny Popkin (ts); Connie Crothers (p); Cameron Brown (b); Carol Tristano (d).

WELL NOW, welcome back to 1949... or thereabouts. The route to Roots is becoming a bit of a traffic jam in places, but once off the main Miles/Coltrane highway there are a number of intriguing byways left still, and these two albums demonstrate how revisiting can work to advantage.

Crothers and Popkin quite frankly take Lennie Tristano as their starting point. Popkin's "L.T." makes no bones about it - the tremendous strength of the piano in those typical tight turns, the misty tenor sound and - perhaps most of all - Carol Tristano's swishing brushes all tell you that this begins where "Marianette" finished 40 years ago, which is to say it takes a particular, analytical view of bebop and reworks that analysis, and its resonances, into the present. It comes off beautifully. Clearly they've heard other music - this is by no means a time-capsule - but they've incorporated what they've used to nurture the basic concept. Thus "How Deep Is The Ocean" recalls at times something of the sense of Cecil Taylor's "Lazy Afternoon" without in any way borrowing directly, and Crothers on Tristano's own "It's You" echoes something of Paul Bley, while "Soul In Minor" represents a rather astonishing raid on the hard boppers. The flow of "Ontology" hangs so tightly together that you realise how well titled it is. Bassist Brown works hard in the engine room, and finally there's a wonderful drum solo on "It's You". It only remains to say, if you can find it, get it - and do your ears a real favour.

Marsh's CD - the last session he did in a recording studio - falls more within the later Tristano diaspora, when Marsh and Lee Konitz took what they'd learned into whatever gigs they could get and taught it to whoever would listen and learn, which for a long time wasn't all that easy for them. As time went by, however, they began to get what life owed them. Marsh, like a number of people before him, built up a following in Scandinavia, and this date finds him heading up a group of locals.

The programme is mainly standards and 'originals' worked from standards, plus such originally consistent blasts from the past as Konitz's "No Splice" and "Kary's Trance". This time there's a curiously nostalgic feel of those Swedish items from the early 1950s which offered us an available name backed by people you'd never heard of but who seemed to have got the hang of things remarkably well whilst remaining just a teensy bit in awe of the giant who had come amongst them. Some of it stems from the rhythm section, which is a touch hesitant at times, but it comes more from Sollid, whose carefully measured phrasing seems to recall this atmosphere almost deliberately. Inderberg, meanwhile, reinforces it a different way by reminding us that one of the people who so startled us in that era was Lars Gullin. It's a lengthy programme, best taken in slices, I feel, but Marsh demonstrates his light, loose dominance of his instrument and his fluidly understated art at all times.

JACK COOKE

JACKIE McLEAN

NEW SOUL

(Blue Note CDP 7 84013 2)

Recorded Milesack, NJ, 2 May 1959.

Hip Street, Mean Apprehension, Gravy, Sweet Cake,

Dance Cap, Funicello

McLean (sax), Donald Byrd (tr), Walter Davis (p), Paul Chambers (b), Pete LaRoca (d)

ANDREW HILL

POINT OF DEPARTURE

(Blue Note CDP 7 84167 2)

Recorded Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 31 March 1961

Refuge, New Mission, Spectrum, Flight 19 (two

takes), Dialectic (two takes)

Hill (p), Kenny Dorham (tr), Eric Dolphy (as, f, bcl), Joe Henderson (tr), Richard Davis (tr), Anthony Williams (d)

THERE WAS a group of us for whom the McLean was more than album of the year, we could re-form tomorrow as the "New Soul Memorial Quintet". Recorded only days after *Kiss Of Blue* and the same week as *Margot At War*, it also opened doors despite being more straightforward than either.

Specifically the tension/release pattern of the long opening track was symmetrical and hypnotic enough to give renewed life to the 12-bar blues, as well as to McLean's recently interrupted career (Bobby Wellins was also a

fan of this unique number, I found out later). The other historic moment is on the furious "Apprehension" (first recorded by Miles as "Minor March" at the same session as "Dr Jackyl", and here speeded up as much as that tune was on *Milesdore*), suddenly, right after the trumpet solo, LaRoca goes out of tempo for two minutes and that was just not done in 1959.

The newly issued "Formidable" is one of four witty items by the pianist, its ensembles a little messy (only by Blue Note standards) but with dynamic solo work. In addition to Jackie playing his heart out, as throughout the album, there's Byrd husily adding Lee Morgan to his influences and making it work.

Soloists are also crucial to the success of *Point Of Departure*, which was new soul for Hill. His first session with horns has superb Dolphy



(especially on bass-clarinets), thoughtful Henderson and Kenny Dorham sounding coincidentally like Harry Beckett (but still sounding like himself despite the absence of bebop changes). Thanks to them and to the urgency of Davis and especially the fledgling Tony Williams, you don't notice the structures but listen to the music unfolding.

Hill's impressive piano is important texturally and there's an interesting difference between the two new takes, that of "Flight 19" being slower and a bit tentative compared to the original issue. On the other hand "Dedication" sounds more spacious, more mournful and more like an improvisation on the previous improvisation. A fitting end to an album that also has its admirers, but deserves to be far better known than it is.

BRIAN PRISTLEY

THE MICHAEL GORDON

PHILHARMONIC

THE MICHAEL GORDON

PHILHARMONIC

(Neutral Records N15)

Recorded New York, no dates.

Strange Quare, And Rave, Thin Shalt Thou Shalt Not!

Evan Ziporyn (cl, bcl), Ted Kuhn (vn, vla), Bob

Loughlin (g), Michael Gordon (ky), Michael Pugliese

(perc), on "Acid Rain" Spectrum; David Campbell

(cl), Philippe Dornes (tr), Irvine Ardatis, Miranda

Fulley (as), Levine Andrade (vla), Year

Mikhaeloff (ky); Roger Dean (b); Guy Protheroe

(cond)

"What the hell," asked my fellow contributor Stephen Holmes in *Wim 65*, "has happened to the minimalist aesthetic?" Hold on Steve, I think I saw it lying around World Headquarters somewhere. Ah yes, here we are. This guy Michael Gordon's looking after it. And it seems to be in safe hands.

These three compositions are safely removed from the overpowered dross and the wushy-washy Landscape Channel outtakes which seemed to be all that remained on the menu for systems fans. If any comparison is valid, I'd look to the Regular Music school of witty-but-understated systemicism-with-a-backbeat. Having said that, this music is a lot more rigorous in its approach to the angular, carefully paced and geometrically precise compositional elements to which uncompromised systems music lends itself. The only iffy question is how many people want to listen. There can be no displays of overt virtuosity in this music, although there's much evidence of commitment to the aesthetic parameters of the music by all concerned here and the discipline imposed by Guy Protheroe's conducting on his excellent ensemble eliminates the raggedy edges which can emerge during the performance of such music.

The two pieces performed by Gordon himself, together with what is presumably his own regular group, the Philharmonic, are lent a sharp edge primarily by the presence of Jon Fields' penetrating electric guitar and secondly by Gordon's scoring for percussion which sounds decidedly serialist in parts, despite being subjected to the systemic process. There's also an almost incidental use of the gradual desynchronisation of rhythmic lines which originally motivated Steve Reich to such a large extent, but Gordon takes an almost perverse delight in pulling the plug on these developments before they swamp whatever else

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is going on — an attitude which extends to his taste for abrupt endings, no bangs or even whimpering, but rather the music just gets switched off when it's done its stuff.

Let's hope, then, that there's still a reasonable level of interest in a minimalist music that's neither pompous nor soppy. If there is, The Michael Gordon Philharmonic would like a moment of your time.

TOM CORBIN

WOODY SHAW

IN MY OWN SWEET WAY

(In + Out Records CD 7003 2)

Recorded: Zurich, 7 February 1987, Bern, 8 February 1987.

The Organ Grinder; In Your Own Sweet Way; The Dragon; Just A Ballad For Woody; Sippin' At Bell's; Estate; Joshua C.

Woody Shaw (s); Fred Henke (p); Neil Swanson (b); Alex Deutsch (d)

THE CARLOS WARD QUARTET

LITO

(Leo Records LR 166)

Recorded: North Sea Jazz Festival, 9 July 1988.

Love is, it, in; Love, First Love, Sandance

Woody Shaw (s); Carlos Ward (as); D. Walter

Schmoecker (b); Alex Deutsch (d)

It was Dolphy who taught the late and very nearly great Woody Shaw to play "inside and outside at the same time", but it was listening to the classics that fined his ear — already perfect-pitched — to the subtler nuances of harmony. Like all imaginative Americans, Shaw was constantly and violently stretched between opposites and inexorably drawn to the things and the places that would destroy him. Europe drew him for all the usual extramusical reasons, but there is a sense, too, that Shaw's foreshortened career represented a sustained fugue from the racially-constrained job-description of the "jazz musician".

However hardly won, Shaw's technique sounded like an effortless given, a fact that tended to disguise the awful disquiet at the root of much of his music. (His influences were not settling ones: at one generic extreme Debussy, the most inside-and-outside of the pre-Schoenberg composers; at the other his Newark friend, the scandalously underrated Larry Young (Khalid Yasin) with whom he recorded the superb *Unity*, and who taught

him, across the grain of the earlier Hubbardly aggression and linearity, the value of chaos and meditative acceptance.)

Much as he was prodigal, Shaw was also notoriously dismissive of his own talents. He did go in his own sweet way, but he gives the Brubeck plodder an extraordinary lyricism. Fred Henke's chords are an essential component but it is Shaw's top line that insists. "The Organ Grinder" (another comically diffident title) is dedicated to the late Young, a brilliantly asymmetrical modal theme ending with a startling cadenza. The low-register finish is packed up in the changes of "Just A Ballad . . .", written by his wife Theresa, and in Bruno Martino's "Estate", once recorded by Gilberto and alluded to by Stan Getz.

The rhythm section are precisely moulded to Shaw's conception (which may belie the belief

on the other album (a version that recolonises it) demonstrates how wide a range of idiom Shaw could muster. That he never put it to more convincing use than in these unintentionally valedictory sets is sad but probably now merits no more than a footnote in the sociology of abuse and neglect.

BRIAN MORTON

KENNY GARRETT

GARRETT 5

(Paddle Wheel K28P 6494)

Recorded: New York, 21-23 September 1988.

Fading Goud, Little Dream, But Beautiful, Little

Melrose, Composer "G", La Bomba, Los Half's Blues,

Tokyo Tower, Oloriko; United We Waltz

Garrett (as); Wallace Roney (t); Mulgrew Miller (p);

Charnett Moffett (b); Tony Reedus (d); Rudy Bird

(perc).

"RESOURCEFUL" is the word critics, including myself, have used most often to describe Kenny Garrett's contributions to Miles's music over the last year or so. As woolly and near-pejorative as the adjective may be, it is accurate enough in describing how Garrett works best when he's uncomfortable — when he's stretched into forms outside the straight 80s mainstream he prefers. When Miles's concert music disintegrates around him or, as on *Amanita*, when he's given enough solo space to cut through the pop production, Garrett rises up to excel and the resources of lyricism, fervour and invention all surface. Conversely, his playing is most confident and direct when he is most exposed.

On *Garrett 5*, even though there is the challenge of delivering inspired music on an album which lasts nearly an hour, the saxophonist is most definitely not uncomfortable. Maybe it is because the Garrett band is just too cosy a coterie by now — all have played on each other's records — and they all understand this post-bop genre outside-in. This LP could equally well be a Mulgrew Miller or Wallace Roney led session.

Yet it is possible to construct one great side of music out of three or four of the leader's compositions. "Oloriko", for example, with its rising Japanese-sounding chords topping and tailing the strong bop melody, has Garrett and the rhythm section on quite brilliant form — the feel loose and energetic, enabling Garrett to fire trills and displaced beats and phrases into the structure. Wallace Roney's smudged



that he was too erratic to make a successful leader) and Neil Swanson puts in some accomplished solo and section work. Drummer Alex Deutsch reappears with Shaw on *Lito*, a remarkable set led by saxophonist Carlos Ward, a player who has always seemed to me to be high on atmospheric (witness some of his work with Paul Motian and the Jazz Composers Orchestra) but structurally unexciting. *Lito* is clearly substantially improvised but though Shaw is the dominant voice (working in a higher than usual register, well away from Ward's mellow sax and flute), it's clearly Ward who controls the trajectories. I found the three pieces on the second side less than inspiring (except, perhaps, "First Love", one of the more oblique Monk tributes in the book), but "Lito" is a very special item. Moving back and forth between it and the rousing "Sippin' At Bell's"

tones and more contained approach also seems to work best contrasted with a less 'swingy' feel.

"Computer G" is another gem, Reedus brushing away fervently behind a speedy, scabbing melody and Garrett building his solo logically and exhaustively. Mulgrew Miller's playing is also remarkable on this track, his comping behind Roney Monk-like in its use of angles and space and his solo equally unpredictable in its composite of blues licks, long, almost Tristano-like runs and bop phrasing.

Yet the remainder of this album is either too impeccably clean or too chillingly unengaging. Garrett's arrangement of "La Bamba" is a terrible mistake – turning a pretty awful Latin jingle into jazz kitsch – as is the slow "Lee Hall's Blues", the leader's bent notes and inflections giving the track more the feel of strip show sleaze than any resoundingly new variation on the blues.

"Little Dixie" also seems more parody than respect. Anybody encouraged by the leader's contributions to Miles's recent output may well be disappointed by this LP.

PHILIP WATSON

DINO SALUZZI ANIMA (ECM 1375)

Recorded: Oslo, May 1988

Dance, Winter, Transcendence, Resonance, Tango Of Oblivion, Chorus, Waltz For Venice, Andina, Memories Saluzzi (bass, fl)

IF ANTON PIZZOLLA's 1988 release *Tango: Zero Hour* amply demonstrated the range of expression that can be wrung, almost literally, from the bandoneon, an Argentinian type of accordion, then Saluzzi's solo album is something else again.

For while his previous two ECM releases have successfully pitched Saluzzi against the fiercer fols of trumpeters Palle Mikkelborg and Enrico Rava, sometimes his smudged chords and shimmering solos got lost in the mix. Here, on a remarkably intimate recording, he surges undiluted and free. So on the more rhythmically dominated tracks such as "Dance" and "Tango Of Oblivion", Saluzzi is more characteristically speedy, his scurrying, dextrous intonations firing shots you need to follow. Yet on a composition like "Winter" the mood is melancholic and stark; the bandoneon's dissonant chords drifting like blasts of

wind across flat, remote icelands.

Equally the instrument can be full-sounding and severe, such as on the loud blocks of chords of "Memories", or dramatic and emotive as with the more devotional "Chorus". And the variety of sounds seems far removed from the modest squeezebox – low trumpets, high piano notes, the peal of church bells – if it is an exaggeration to say Saluzzi conjures up the awesome resonances of a cathedral organ, the physicality of the recording makes you feel like you are almost inside one, as he clicks the bandoneon's buttons or lets out great dragon-like puffs before a final dynamic attack.

OK, extra-musical and distracting these may be but don't write off this album as too pretentious, too one-dimensional. It makes for remarkably evocative listening.

PHILIP WATSON



PAULINE OLIVEROS THE ROOTS OF THE MOMENT (hat ART CD 6009)

Recorded: Switzerland, 10 November 1987

The Roots Of The Moment

Oliveros (acc); Peter Ward (digital processors).

ONE OF the early accredited influences on what has variously been described as either "process" or "systems" music, Oliveros, along with her contemporary Terry Riley, seemed to gradually fall out of the frame as Messrs Philip Glass's and Steve Reich's more strictly programmatic pieces established themselves by a kind of commercial consensus as "the norm". But the great divide was, more reasonably, one of inherently different priorities: both Oliveros and Riley are dedicated primarily to the improvisational art, something wholly divorced

from the neo-scientific approach emblazoned in, say, Glass's quasi-mathematical progressions. In a sense, Oliveros lays bare her ethnic soul.

Whilst the majority of her recorded work features Oliveros' chief love, the accordion, some of her earlier material concerned primarily electronic media. Latterly that influence has started to creep back into her work, albeit as a more subservient one. Her last visit to Britain saw her utilising live sampling techniques as a mechanical interactive foil to her improvisations. With this latest offering, she goes the whole hog, bringing in a sound projectionist, Peter Ward, to create a shifting electro-acoustical space in which the accordion is but one half of a complex whole.

Oliveros plays, Ward transforms the sound, Oliveros reacts and so on; on paper the results sound fitful, but the aural reality boasts a mercurial, almost dreamlike quality. Oliveros's and Ward's experiment is not the first of its kind on record: Lol Coxhall's and Simon Emmerson's *Digital Delusions* (Random Radar) and a collection by Bob Osiering, *Getting A Head (Rift)* with Fred Frith and Charles Noyes, are clear forerunners (scout the second-hand stores for them) where the interaction was no less intimate and intense, albeit very different in their textural constructions.

But never has the process seemed quite as well-boned as here. The work (clocking in at close on 59 minutes) is too large to get a firm grip on – it seemingly proffers different angles with every play. Catch its drift and sometimes you'll end up asleep – but that's OK, for Oliveros and Ward sell dreams.

DAVID HIC

AILANA MYSTERIOUS PLANET (Hannibal HNBL 1324)

Recorded: Miami, Florida, no date given.

Mysterious Planet; Battle Hymn Of The Republic, Chorus For Peace, Ailana's Dream; What's That White, The Spiral Staircase, Just A Closer Walk With Thee Charles Austin (ss, as, f, bf), John McMan (tr, f, syn), Joe Gallivan (perc), Nelson Padron (perc), Earl Lloyd (v).

SOMETIMES LESS IS LESS. A pared-down, temperate approach can fail to deliver anything meaningful at all. Still, occasionally, on this second album from Ailana, the Charles Austin/

Joe Gallivan band, the technique works. On the opening title track for example, a composition introduced by space-age *Chloroform*-type effects, the subtle, intertwining synth and electric percussion sounds work well, the textures vulcanised by the long, languorous tenor work of ex-Basie reedsman John McMinna.

Yet mostly, the LP is bathed in a kind of floating, cosmic echo that becomes tiresome, even soporific. "Chant For Peace" (do they still write titles like that on albums called *Mysterious Planet*?) is a prime example. Although Gallivan's shifting percussion has an engaging Indian feel to it and the watery synth effects stir images of movement and long journeys, there is little else and the backwash seems as if it needs another ingredient to make it connect. Charles Austin's flute work on the piece does not have the power, dynamics or expressive range to really lift the music.

"The Spiral Staircase" is another lamentable six-and-a-half minutes of rolling, meditative ebbs and flows and the addition of the vocals of the 12-year-old soprano Earl Lloyd on two tracks helps little. His rousing, gruff gospel singing may take us away from the holy terror of being classified 'jazz', but "Battle Hymn Of The Republic" has one too many "glory, glory, hallelujahs" for my liking.

PHILIP WATSON

DANNY THOMPSON WHATEVER NEXT (Antilles AN 8743)

Danzas, Hopdances, Boaspele, Wildfinger, A Full English Basket, Sandokito Ore, Take It Off The Top, Mayor Escapade

Thompson (b), Paul Dunmall (reeds), Tony Roberts (reeds, pipes), Benjie Holland (g)

TREVOR WATTS' MOIRÉ MUSIC WITH ONE VOICE (Arc 03)

Recorded: Rye Festival, 8 September 1988
Themes For America Nos 1 & 2, And We Ever Say Goodbye

Watts (as), Simon Pickard (ts), Lane Carrall (vel, ky), Vervan Weston (p), Richard Granville-Smith (p acc), Colin Gibson (b), Liam Genockey (d), Nana Tsuboe, Kofi Adu (perc)

ON *WHATEVER NEXT* Danny Thompson

attempts to reproduce the same folk-jazz formula that made *Whatever* one of 1987's most unlikely successes, whilst *With One Voice* sees Trevor Watts pushing the same combination of minimalism, jazz and progressive rock that characterised his earlier Moiré Music recordings. As intriguing as such fusions might look on paper, I can't say that either of them does anything for me in actual practice.

Not being particularly interested in maypoles, Fair Isle sweaters or vocalists who have to keep a finger in the ear in order to sing in tune, I can't vouch for the authenticity of such *Whatever Next* tracks as "Hopdance" or "A Full English Basket", which attempt to give a new lease of life to traditional English folk music by relocating it in a mainstream acoustic jazz setting. Knowing a little bit about acoustic jazz, however, I feel justified in being



depressed by tracks like "Major Escapade" and "Wildfinger", and their insubstantial efforts to telescope the textural qualities of a big band into a chamber jazz format. The latter's sleeve note dedication to John Martyn is significant only in highlighting the record's saving grace, guitarist Benjie Holland's performance on the flamenco section of "A Full English Basket", where his brief but telling solo applies a very English sense of restraint to the classical flourishes of Paco de Lucia and Paco Pena.

Two thirds of the way through the 20 minutes of "Themes For America No 2" you wish that some of that same restraint had leaked through into Trevor Watts' writing for *With One Voice*. The saxophonist's approach to composition, piling simple motifs one on top of the other and arranging them to drift in and out of phase, has a certain attraction but the results

get tedious after a while. The rigid structures allow little room for improvisation so the only distractions become ones of texture and colouring, and neither Paul Granville-Smith's piano accordion or the exotic input of Ghanaian percussionists Nana Tsuboe and Kofi Adu have sufficient weight to carry the music through the length of an entire LP.

TONY HERRINGTON

MICHEL PETRUCCIANI MICHEL PLAYS PETRUCCIANI (Blue Note CDP 7 48679-2)

Recorded: 24 September and 9-10 December 1987
Six Dads At Agate, One For U, Sahara, I Wish, My K.J., One Night At Ken And Janna's, It's A Dance, Lu Champs, Brazilian Soul
Michel Petrucciani (p), Gary Peacock (b, 1-5), Roy Haynes (d, 1-5), Eddie Gomez (b, 6-9), Al Foster (d, 6-9), John Abercrombie (g), Steve Thornton (perc)

It's not really surprising that this album by the young Monsieur Petrucciani (a mere 26) sounds so mature and well-rounded, as the guy was working the circuit before he was 16. More remarkable is the pervading tone of sunny, clear-headed serenity which emerges from every one of his compositions - a mood more than capably supported by his companions.

Petrucciani shares a Gallic penchant for achingly sweet melodies with fellow pianist Keith Jarrett, but as more mercurial in his expression. This combination works superbly on "It's A Dance", where he glides over the keyboard from a waltz to a two-step, with dream-like grace. The LP offers a bright clutch of compositions, with only one or two lesser tracks. Perhaps the strongest is "Sahara", which features a simple chromatic theme worked into a fulsome sound by Peacock and Haynes, while Petrucciani adds some inspired colour, including a lovely hammered sequence which swells and fills the soundstage. Masterful.

If there was to be one criticism of the content here, it would be that, while good cheer and good playing warm heart and ear alike, there's nothing like a touch of passion to stir the blood. And my blood remained quite unmoved. I mean, you need thunder to really appreciate the calm. But then, at 26, there's plenty of time for that.

VERONICA LYONS

FAST LICKS

An astiduous spin through the new sounds

by Brian Priestley

BENNY CARTER: MY KIND OF TROUBLE (Pablo 2310-935). The alto octogenarian goes on sounding as he has for the last half-century, consummately commanding, effortlessly inventive. His lines might seem to decorate the rhythm-section rather than the other way around but Joe Pass, though more lively than sometimes, and even the organ of Art Hillery are anonymous enough to make you focus on the sax after all. The inclusion of "Only Trust Your Heart" (of Astrud G fame) is a reminder of the many great tunes that come from Carter as well.

JUNIOR COOK QUARTET: THE PLACE TO BE (Scepterbase SCS-1240). A meaty album from the tenor player who came up with Horace Silver 30 years ago, trying hard here to become the next Dexter. On the reharmonised "Over The Rainbow" he treads the tightrope between emotion and academicism with great conviction. The up-tempo "Are You Real?" and Tom McIntosh's (mis)captioned "Cup Bearers" seem a mile too involved for his taste, whereas pianist Mickey Tucker cuts up the changes in fine style. Not earth-shattering but highly enjoyable.

COLEMAN HAWKINS QUARTET: LIVE FROM THE LONDON HOUSE (Jasmine JASM2521). The Hawkins of 1963 was very much in command, his timing deceptively convoluted on "I Can't Get Started" and his tone still powerful but astringent. Both aspects seem like an Olympian nod to the much younger Coltrane, and long tracks give Hawk a chance to stretch out. The two airshots (Side One previously on *Spotlite* with the announcer curtailed) find Tommy Flanagan coping well with a dutiful piano and the routines are, well, routine. But it's the good late-period Hawkins which makes this all worthwhile.

EDDIE "LOCKJAW" DAVIS: SAVE YOUR LOVE FOR ME (Bluebird NDB6463). / **COUNT BASIE & ROY ELDRIDGE: LOOSE WALK** (Pablo 2310-928). The chunky tenor sound is well showcased on the Bluebird compilation, from three

late-60s albums never released here. The generally short tracks have few solos other than "Jaws" (with a notable exception in the stylistically related Paul Gonsalves on two pieces) and his terse statements on warhorses like "On A Clear Day" and "Green Dolphin Street" are typically idiosyncratic. As one of three ex-Basieites guesting with the Count's rhythm-section on a 72 European tour, he doesn't sound so striking. I saw the equivalent set in London, and found him and Al Grey average while Eldridge was below par. The best moments come from Basie who, nominally just there to goad the front-line, briefly limbers up for his 70s small-group recordings.

ERSKINE HAWKINS: THE ORIGINAL TUXEDO JUNCTION (Bluebird 9682-1-RB). I suppose it's necessary for a US-produced reissue of Haw-

ERSKINE HAWKINS AND HIS ORCHESTRA
THE ORIGINAL TUXEDO JUNCTION



kins's swing-era stalwarts to open with their three most successful tracks. "Tuxedo" is the one we all know thanks to the generosity (?) of Glenn Miller, but in 1939 only the conversion could make it since the original would never cross-over. "After Hours" didn't even rate a cover, because it was just too funky. The earliest items have some rough musicianship, while later success brought inevitable slackness. Yet, according to the notes, they still "played almost entirely to black audiences".

STANTON DAVIS: MANHATTAN MELBOY (Enja 5089). Now this is interesting. A recent Lester Bowie sideman, trumpeter Davis goes back to George Russell's band of the early 70s and this virtual debut album touches a number of bases. His own brassy but not flash playing recalls recent Miles and Bowie among others,

but his wide-open group sound and material suggest a post-Chicagoan update of Don Cherry's mid-60s Blue Notes. The acoustic quartet with Mark Dresser on bass and saxist Dave Mann, better used than on his own Antilles album, is augmented (not diminished) by discreet synth effects from Carl Smermer. Atmospheric bits alternate with street rhythms ("Sweet Basil" is a jazz tango) and the whole has an uncompromising jazz feel.

SUPERBLUE: SUPERBLUE (Blue Note CDP 91731 2). A slick post-bop octet in the manner of George Coleman, who also used to include Bobby Watson's "Conservation". The remaining numbers are arranged by trumpeter-publisher Don Sickler, who solos well alongside the ex-Messengers Watson, Bill Pierce and Mulgrew Miller. Trombonist Frank Lacy doesn't sound so happy here, while the young Roy Haugrove seems too careful and correct (well, fairly correct). The programming, though, from "Open Sesame" (by Tina Brooks) to Mobley's "M & M" - via Curtis Fuller's "Time Off" - scarcely puts a foot wrong.

JIM RICHARDSON'S POGGIE DON'T GET EMOTIONAL (Sputate SPJ537). Perhaps the album should be called *Don't Get Critical* but, compared to other items here, this tenor-and-rhythm quartet is low on energy (or is it the recording level?) The bassist-leader contributes two originals and chooses an interesting programme including two Monk's, a Rollins and three Trane ticklers. If Bob Sydor sounds over-earnest on "Soul Eyes", it's the rhythm-section that plods here and there, whereas guitarist Jeff Green takes more chances and often pulls them off.

SAUTER-FINEGAN ORCHESTRA: DIRECTIONS IN MUSIC (Bluebird NDB6468). There's some evidence here for arranger Eddie Sauter as the link between Ellington and early Gil Evans (plus some of the same players Gil used), mainly on the ballads. The more typical output from this famous 50s band of studio veterans is too busy by half, and much of it is "funny" business somewhere between contemporary Billy May and Loose Tubes. Or else it's the flute and xylophones and tymps taken over by Henry Mancini (the notes fail to identify the percussive effect achieved on "Midnight Sleigh Ride" by Sauter slapping his thigh with a cupped hand!) Chosen by Finegan, the com-

pilation wastes quite a few tracks but it's the only one we'll get, and anyone into arranging (rather than jazz) should hear his and the late Sauter's writing.

HERB ELLIS & RED MITCHELL: *DOGAAN'* *AROUND* (Concord CJ-372). Clearly a follow-up title to the Karen Mantler (below), this album with its cover cartoon by Gary (The Far Side) Larsen doesn't include the Basic number of the same name, but does have Mitchell's 12-bar dedication to Walter (Big 'N) Page. The ten crisply-taped live tunes are lively but on a fairly tight rein, as if Ellis's invention won't stretch very far, like Barney Kessel, the guitarist's timing and articulation are pretty sloppy these days. But some of Mitchell's ideas are breathtaking (musically as well as technically) and the duo perks up each time he plays lead.

KAREN MANTLER: *MY CAT ARNOLD* (XenaWATT3). Obviously this is supposed to be the wackiest album of the year. Karen (by Mike out of Carla Bley) has lined up a regular band with Dave Sanborn's son Jon on bass, a photographer's son on drums, and additional improvised vocals by Eric Mingus (yes, that's right). "Additional" because, while Eric has a promising Eddie Jefferson-ish voice, Karen sings lead on every track and does it about as well as Carla. A pity, because her instrumental writing shows the same quirkiness as Bley's. Her lyrics, however, are typified by: "How can I explain why I love her / She's my mother and no one / Loves me more than her / Except my cat Arnold". Oh dear.

GARRY DIAL/DICK OATTS: *DEAL & OATTS* (DPM CD-465) / *HAROLD DANKO: ALONE BUT NOT FORGOTTEN* (Swanyide SSC1033). The eponymous album of the two Red Rodney sidemen is too much of a fairly good thing. Splitting the writing between them, pianist Dial and reedman Oatts have created 15 mood pieces, some of which distantly recall Jarrett's European quartet. All of them rely for their effect on a lush string-section (recorded live - wow!) but none is memorable enough despite the obvious effort entailed. Something similar applies to Danko's piano trio, whose post-Bill Evans approach is minimally augmented by strings on two originals. But, whether original or borrowed, the material remains untranscended by Danko's treatment.

OUTLINES

Latino licks lavishly landed

by Tony Harrington

ORIGINALLY RELEASED in 1958 as *Kenya* and now reissued as part of Chatly Records' licensing of the Fania label group, Machito & His Afro-Cubans' *Latin Soul Plus Jazz* (Hot 120) is one of the great records of New York Latin music. The combination of an all-star eight-piece percussion section and the inspired arrangements of Mario Bauza and Rene Hernandez (who would later work similar wonders on Eddie Palmieri's landmark 70s recordings) provides the perfect platform for guest soloists of the calibre of



Cannonball Adderley, Johnny Griffin and Curtis Fuller. Listen to the tacit integration of Adderley's bop-inflected solo with the mambo-derived scoting on "Wild Jungle" and you'll hear the culmination of the fusion process that began in the early 30s with Alberto Socarras and Xavier Cugat and continued through the 40s and 50s on recordings by Dizzy Gillespie, Chano Pozo, Sabu Martinez, Cal Tjader and others.

Rumours circulating last year that legendary Cuban diva La Lupe was confined to an insane asylum only added to the reputation of a singer whose physical approach to music was once described as "sado-masochist with a sense of rhythm". Throughout the 60s she blitzkrieged her way through a repertoire that ranged far and wide across pan-Caribbean source musics, big band mambo, boogaloo and MOR pop. On

Tio Mach (Hot 123) the support she receives from Tito Puente's 60s Orchestra is occasionally inadequate in the extreme, but the intense, dramatic qualities of her voice more than compensate for any shortfalls in the music.

Three of the records in this latest batch of Caliente releases underline the extent to which *Nuyorican* musicians had successfully absorbed the various strands of mainstream Afro-American music by the early 60s. *Congacero* Joe Cuba and singer Joe Bataan are mostly associated with the boogaloo era but their records covered a wide spectrum of both Latin and US music. *Hanging Out* (Hot 126), a compilation of tracks from Cuba's Tico LPs, illustrates the point, mixing up organ and percussion instrumentals and the boogaloo kitsch of "Psychedelic Baby" with the more straightforward small combo salsa that characterised the bulk of his recordings in the 70s. A similar air of schizophrenia hangs over *Mr. New York* (Hot 122), where Joe Bataan takes the trombone-based *cumbia* sound of Eddie Palmieri's *La Perfecta* and combines it with various extraneous elements; doo wop on "Special Girl", Salsoul guitar and Yoruba chants on "Puerto Rico Me Llama" and tragicomic operatic soul on "What Good Is A Castle".

Bataan's reputation extended beyond the boundaries of the East Harlem barrio mainly through his successful cover versions of mainstream soul hits. Volume three of *We Got Latin Soul* (Hot 125) features 13 further examples of this process, including five tracks from the great Brooklyn pianist Ricardo Ray, whose early *Se Salto* and *Jala Jala Y Boogaloo* LPs were primarily responsible for exposing the crossover potential of the Latin Soul fusion.

Right up to the early 80s Ray Barretto was one of a group of *Nuyorican* musicians who maintained multi-directional careers, moving freely between various Latin and non-Latin genres, but in recent years he has remained true to a specific vision of classic 70s salsa. *Ritmo En El Corazon* (Hot 124), his latest release and a collaboration with Celia Cruz, successfully recreates the atmosphere of such earlier albums as *Nada Se Salva De La Ramona*.

Three years ago the omnipotence of NY salsa came under outside attack from the great *surunga* orchestras of the Dominican Republic. Now it's the turn of the various groups that operate out of the stables of Columbia's Disco Funeo and Disco Victoria labels. *Rebellion* (World Circuit WCB 012) by Joe Arroyo Y

La Verdad is the first UK release for a style of music that is rapidly stealing audiences from Bogota to the South Bronx. Like the majority of the New Wave of Columbian musicians, Arroyo's approach is to rework his native *cumbia* into the same Caribbean mix that is currently absorbing the indigenous musics of Cuba, Dominica, the French Antilles and Trinidad, thus giving it a pan-Hispanic appeal. The process works best on a track like "Echao Pa' Lanre", whilst "Rebellion" itself presents a more localised version of the *cumbia* format.

Also available for the first time on domestic release (via New Note) is a batch of LPs from the German Latin specialists Messidor. Three are of Cuban origin: Los Van Van's *Saudades* (19943), which allows you to hear the veteran *charanga*'s greatest hits in their original, low budget Studio Egrem mixes as opposed

to the 48-track digital Paris production job on *Soogo* (Mango ILPS 9908); Irakere's overblown and uninspiring *Misa Negra* (15971); and one-time piano prodigy Gonzalo Rubalcaba's *Mr. Great Passion* (15998), an unconvincing attempt to update turn-of-the-century Cuban forms such as the French-derived *danzon* by applying them to the modal jazz of McCoy Tyner and Keith Jarrett.

Less ambitious but infinitely more enjoyable is the first UK release by the great Venezuelan vocalist Soledad Bravo. *Volando Voy* (15965) covers similar pan-Latin/jazz territory to Floa Putum's Milestone LPs and features a singularly intimidating supporting cast - NY salsa veterans Nicky Marrero and Yomo Toro, Brazilian luminaries Airto Moreira and Jorge Daltos and Cuban saxophonist Paquito D'Rivera. The uptempo tracks are already beginning to take hold in the clubs but the

heart of the record is in ballads like "La Ultima Carda" and "Toradas De Ordeño", a spellbinding duet with bassist Eddie Gomez.

On *Interventamental* (15990), Brazilian singer/composer Itamar Assumpaco seems able to cram more ideas into one two-minute song than most musicians manage over an entire LP. Conceived as an aural representation of his native Sao Paulo, the record charges through its 18 tracks (none longer than three minutes, some as short as 58 seconds) leaving fleeting glimpses of sambas, pagodes, reggae, free jazz, Jimi Hendrix, Frank Zappa and the 70s Latin funk of West Coast groups Mandrill and Azteca. Play it straight after you've heard *Tempo De Bahia* (Blue Moon BM 125), an eclectic but irresistible compilation of Bahian pop past and present, and you'll understand why Assumpaco has something of a reputation as a maverick in his native country.



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- 34/35 **Lester Bowie**, Bradford Marialis, Dexter Gordon, Louis Tabor, Serge Chaboff, Paul Lytton & Paul Lorenz, Frank Zappa, Val Wilmer photos.
- 36 **Steve Williamson**, Phillip Best, Bill Frisell, Art Farmer, Tishmon Kinds.
- 37 **Bobby McFerrin**, Haugboe Hove, John Leric, Dirty Dean Brady Band, Bill Bruford.
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- 56 **Composers**, Carla Bley, John Cage, Jandub Watt, Mike Gidde, Misha Mengelberg.
- 57 **Bird**, Billy Bang, Darius Gonzalez, Charlie McPherson, Red Rodney, Tony Scott.
- 58/59 **Dave O'Higgins**, Ronald Shannon Jackson, Albert Ayler, Tim Berne, Manfred Eicher, Henry Red Allen, Michael Mantler, Soux Yousi.
- 60 **Andy Sheppard**, Jack DeJohnette, Lived Hampton, Odalys de la Meritene, Steve Baker.
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SUCH SWEET PEA THUNDER

I AGREE with Mark Dorber: *Wire* 63 did Ellington (and Strayhorn) proud on the 90th anniversary of the former's birth. But there's no mystery about who composed "The Star-Crossed Lovers" from the *Sack Suit Thunder* suite (1957). One of the numbers recorded by Johnny Hodges when he was away from the Ellington band for four years (1951-55) was "Pretty Girl". It's by Strayhorn and is the same melody as "Star-Crossed". So James Lincoln Collier was right when he wrote in his book on Ellington that he suspected that some of the material in *SST* was already in existence and attached to the Shakespearean characters in the best way Ellington and Strayhorn could find.

"Pretty Girl" was re-issued by French Verve in the early 1980s on volume three of *The Complete Works Of Rabbit*. I can't give more details because, having a surfeit of Rabbit (if that's possible), in a rare and regretted moment of generosity I gave this album with a few other LPs to a nephew, hoping they would kindle his interest in jazz. Obviously, "Pretty Girl" will be on the recently issued *Complete Johnny Hodges Sessions 1951-55* on Mosaic MR6-126.

SID EVANS, Chirk, Wales

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L NOT RAVI

I'M SURE you've had hundreds of letters telling you this, but it wasn't Ravi Shankar that Jan Garbarek played with. It was the violin-playing L Shankar. A minor blemish on your otherwise excellent cover story by Brian Morton (*Wire* 64).

MAURICE BINKS, Stranraer

Quite right - and yes, we have had lots of people tell us so - Ed.

HIS WHAT?

WHILST I retain a passing interest in the cut both of Andy Sheppard's hair and of his suits, as a saxophonist, what I really want to know is: who does his shotblasting?

STUART JOHNSON, Middlesbrough

DIVINE ACTION

ON READING Steve Lake's article on Keith Jarrett in *Wire* 64, I was reminded of a bizarre incident I witnessed during Jarrett's Manchester concert in 1982.

In the middle of a long improvisation, with Jarrett groaning and writhing, a camera flash went off. The music stopped, and Jarrett fell back as if shot. On coming to, he jumped up, loudly demanding that the hapless photographer identify himself, then insisted that he leave the hall, as he'd "lost his privilege" of being there. Jarrett advised him that the offending photo was useless. "What'll you tell people?" I took this just before he threw me out."

As the slow handclap grew, I then realised who Jarrett reminded me of. With all that self-importance, it could only be John McEnroe.

JIM BAILLIE, Glasgow

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philip glass (wire 42)

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last exit (wire 41)

The answer was C. Inchy Fingers haven't been produced by Bill Laswell

The winners were: John Townsend of Wrothley, Keith Thompson of Belfast, Mrs L Clark of Salford, Richard Robson-Smith of Thame Bridge, J Wales of Patney, R J Perry of Lydney, G Thorpe of Middleton, Simon Munson of Birmingham, Steve Maddocks of Aylesham, Steve Day of Bristol, Mrs M Caggrave of Manchester, D Watling of London SE23, Steve May of Hertford, M J Travers of Edinburgh, Matt Phillips of Merton, M Jackson of Scarborough, M J Boyd of Belfast, Dave Mitchell of Telford, Paul Grainger of London E8, and Bill Hackney of Southampton

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